# CHCCCION Conscription

GEORGE BAIN

CONSTABLE LONDON





#### The Methods of Construction

# GEORGE BAIN scanned by number-g



Hardback edition published by Wm Maclellan Publisher 268 Bath Street Glasgow G2 4JR

Paperback edition published by Constable and Company Ltd 3 The Lanchesters 162 Fulham Palace Road London W6 9ER

Copyright © Harvey Menzies Johnston 1977

First impression 1951
Second impression 1972
Third impression 1975
Fourth impression 1976
Fifth impression 1977
Sixth impression 1978
Seventh impression 1979
Eighth impression 1981
Ninth impression 1982
Tenth impression 1984
Eleventh impression 1986
Twelfth impression 1987
Thirteenth impression 1989
Fourteenth impression 1990

ISBN 0 85335 196 1 (hardback) ISBN 0 09 461830 5 (paperback)

Printed in Great Britain by Redwood Press Limited, Melksham, Wiltshire

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS.
The trustees of the Walker Art Gallery, Liverpool for permission to reproduce the portrait of Henry VIII

British Library cataloguing in publication data

Bain, George
Celtic art: the methods of construction
1. Decoration and ornament, Celtic—
Pictorial works
I. Title
745.4'41 NK1264

ISBN 0 09 461830 5



Dedicated to my friend
the late HUGH A. FRASER, M.B.E., M.A.,

Drumnadrochit,
who first introduced me to the works of J. Romilly Allen
and sent me on this most
engrossing quest.



"Theory may inform but Practice convinces."

"The Lord hath filled him with the spirit of God, in wisdom, in understanding, and in knowledge, and in all manner of workmanship, and to devise curious works, to work in gold, and in silver, and in brass, and in the cutting of stones, to set them, and in carving of wood, to make any manner of cunning work."

"Them hath he filled with wisdom of heart, to work all manner of work, of the engraver, and the cunning workman, and of the embroiderer, in blue, and in purple, in scarlet, and in fine linen, and of the weaver, even of them that do any work, and those that devise cunning work."

EXODUS, CHAP. 35, VERSES 31, 35.

"And now I have sent a cunning man, endowed with understanding—skilful to work in gold and in silver, in brass, in iron, in stone, and in timber, in purple, in blue and in fine linen, and in crimson; also to grave any manner of graving, and to find out every device which shall be put to him."

CHRONICLES, CHAP. 2, VERSE 31.

"Many years may be spent in the search after knowledge, but if the right path is hit at first, it may be attained in a little time."

"By minds already stored with information, whether it be acquired by the instruction of others or by dint of personal application, preceptive books will be frequently rejected. What has been diligently attained is too often assiduously hoarded; and pride and envy co-operate with avarice to render the progress of knowledge difficult and expensive."

Anonymous, 1795.



### Contents

#### Frontispieces

#### THE TARA BROOCH

THE CRUCIFORM PAGE FROM THE LINDISFARNE GOSPELS

#### Preface

Page Fifteen

#### Introduction

Page Twenty-one

#### KNOTWORK BORDERS

Plate		Page	Plate		Page
	Introduction	25	$7\cdot$	Knotwork borders	32
A.	Precursors of Celtic Interlacings	27	8.	Interlacing borders	32
В.	The methods of construction	28	9.	Interlacing borders	33
1.	General principles for designing Celtic Knotwork	29	10.	Interlacing borders	33
2.	General principles of methods of		11.	Further border designs	34
	construction	29	12.	Method of doubling interlacings	34
3.	Simple Celtic interlacing borders	30	13.	Method of mitring	35
4· 5·	Celtic Knotwork borders	30	14.	Method of mitring	35
9.	interlacings	31	C.	Construction of ornaments, Monymusk	26
6	Border designs and their application to			Reliquary	36
	circles	31	D.	Construction of Viking ornament, Lewis -	37

#### KNOTWORK PANELS

Plate		Page	Plate		Pag
E.	Examples from Gospels of Lindisfarne and Book of Kells	40	8.	Panels common to Lindisfarne, Ulbster, Collieburn and Glammis	48
F.	Comparison of similar designs at Salisbury and in Perthshire, Angus and Caithness	41	9.	Construction of Nigg Stone Panel	49
G.	Design on cross-slab at Ulbster, Caithness	42	10.	Example from a Book of Durrow border -	49
Н.	Panel from Book of Kells	43	11	Irish and Pictish Knotwork-Durrow	50
1.	Simple Knotwork Panels	45	12.	Unit from Book of Durrow	50
2.	Knotwork Panel in Pictish proportions -	45	13.	Knotwork in circular panels. Shandwick Stone and Book of Kells	51
3.	Variations from Plates 1 and 2 from Book of Kells	46	14.	Circular panels—Book of Kells and Hilton of Cadbol Stone	51
$4 \cdot$	Example of continuity-St. Madocs Stone	46	I.	Construction orders-Plate II, Book of	51
5.	Further methods of constructing Knotwork Panels	47	1.	Durrow	52
6.	Examples from Ulbster and Strathmartin Stones	47	J.	Completed design—Plate II, Book of Durrow	53
7.	Reptile Knotwork Panels, Shandwick Stone also panel from Lindisfarne, St. Vigeans,	7.00	К.	Design from Page of Eight Circled Cross, Kells	54
	Dunfallandy, Eassie and McDurnan -	48	L.	Interlacing in Rossie Priory Stone	55

#### SPIRALS

Plate		Page	Plate		Page
	Introduction	59	6.	Examples of spiral centres from M.S.S. and enamel work	63
М.	Aberlemno Stone-use of Triskele in all- over repeats. Examples of travesties of		7.	Spiral groups—Book of Durrow	64
	this design made in the past	60	8.	Spirals-Kells and Lindisfarne	64
1.	Methods of constructing spirals	61	9.	Spiral Borders	65
2.	Construction of spiral centres	61	10.	Borders and Terminals from M.S.S. and Ornamented Stones	65
3.	Spirals and breaking into 'trumpets' -	62	11.	Spiral panel and Hilton of Cadboll Stone	66
$4\cdot$	Joining spirals—Kells and Aberlemno examples	62	12.	Panel on Shandwick Stone	66
5.	Spiral centres from ancient British and		13.	All-over spiral patterns-M.S.S. and stones	67
.,	Pictish enamel work	63	14.	Examples from Kells and Lindisfarne -	67

#### KEY PATTERNS

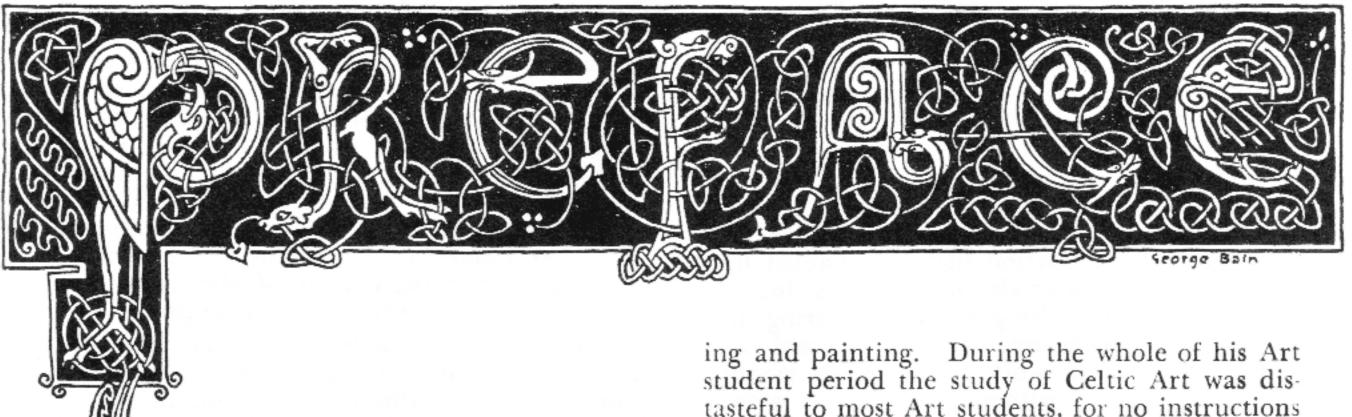
Plate		Page	Plate		Page
	Introduction	71	8.	Comparison of methods by Welsh and Pictish designers in Pembrokeshire and	
N.	Key pattern on arm of Aberlemno Cross showing earlier travesties	74	9-	Reconstruction of panel—Collieburn Stone	78
1.	The construction of Key patterns	75		Kells border and terminal	79
2.	Key pattern borders and mitring	75	10.	Comparison of Aberlemno, Aberlady and Lindisfarne keys	79
3.	Patterns from Rosemarkie Stone and Lindisfarne	76	11	Examples of the minute accuracy of Kells scribes. Comparison of Kells and Farr Stone keys	80
4.	Key pattern borders and panels	76	12.	Further work of Kells scribes. Comparison of Rosemarkie, St Chads and Kells keys	80
5.	Treatment of Nigg Stone and comparison with Maya Keys	77	13.	Application of key patterns to panels	81
6.	Nigg Stone Key panel and variations -	77	14.	Comparison of designs from Mezin, Russia	
7.	Key patterns-Nigg, Kells and Lindisfarne	78		(B.C. 20,000—B.C. 15,000), Kells Lindisfarne and Farr	81
	LE	тт	ERIN	G	
Plate	Introduction	Page 85	Plate 9.	Letters U, V, W, X, Y, Z	Page 93
1.	Kells script, quill formation	89	10.	Celtic alphabets of late 7th century and	
2.	Celtic small and capital 'A' from Books of			4th-6th century	93
	Durrow, Kells and Lindisfarne	89	11.	Ornamented Celtic capital letters	94
3.	Letters B, C, and D	90	12.	Ornamented capitals from Kells and Durrow	94
4.	Letters H. I. I. I.	90	13.	Ornamented capitals from Book of Kells -	95
5· 6.	Letters M, N, O	91	14.	Symbols and contractions from Celtic	
7.	Letters P, Q, R, 4th-6th century	92		M.S.S. and language problems from inscribed stones	95
8.	Letters S, T	92	15.	Celtic type from an Irish book of 1711 -	
	200	мо	RPH	1 C 2	
Plate		Page	Plate		Page
Ο.	Detail from Plate XIX — Kells Studio	101	K.	Construction of design on 'Initium Evangeli' page of Kells	106
0.	edition	100	S.	Panel from Kells page of Eight circled	
Ρ.	Designs with human figures	104		Cross	107
Q.	All-over drop repeat from Lindisfarne Gospels	105	1.	Bird Motifs in Lindisfarne Interlacing Ornaments	109

#### ZOOMORPHICS CONTINUED

Plate		D	Dista		
2.	Treatments of Birds, heads, top-knots, necks, bodies, wings, tails, legs and toes	Page	Plate	Semi-realistical and mythical Animals— Scottish Stones and Kells	Page
	in Book of Kells		11.	'Living Things of the Earth'-Kells Christ	
3.	Birds as ornament motifs. Kells	110		Monogram Page	114
4.	Bird ornaments, Kells and Tara Brooch -	110	12.	Interlacing Human Figures—Clonmacnoise and Meigle Stones and Kells XPI	
5.	Birds as interlacing ornaments—Kells, MacRegol and Meigle Stone			Monogram Page	114
	Mackegor and Meigle Stoffe	111	13.	Figures in Ornament-Clonmacnoise and	
6.	Reptiles as Interlacing ornaments—Kells	111		Kells	115
7.	Reptiles as Interlacing ornaments-Kells	112	14.	Interlaced Human male figures-Kells -	115
8.	Dog-like Animals—Kells	112	Т.	Knotwork adapted to irregular shapes— Plate XI Letter T—Kells	116
9.	Animals as Interlacing Ornaments-Kells	113	U.	Kells designs-Plates I, III, XII, and XIV	117
	PLA	NT	FO	R M S	
Plate		Page	Plate		Page
	Introduction—The Celtic Tree of Life -	121	A3.	Comparison of 'Potted Tree of Life'	
v.	Designs from Kells Plates II, IV, XIV, and	V		examples—Kells, Cottonian M.S., Eassie and Farnell Stones and Maya Art	124
	XVII also Meigle and Monifieth Stones	120	$A_4$ .	'Tree of Life'-Kells and North of England	124
A1.	'Tree of Life' designs—Kells	123	A <sub>5</sub> .	Examples from Book of Kells and South	
A2.	'Tree of Life' symbol-Kells, Cadboll,			Scotland	125
	Nigg, Tarbet — Compared with Buddhist, Byzantine and Greek sources -	123	W.	Plant Forms—Kells Plates III, XIV and XIX	126
	HUMA	N	FIG	URES	
Plate		Page	Plate		Page
	Introduction Semi - realistic Human	_	В3.	Hands and Feet-Kells, Lindisfarne and	J
	Figures and probable Portraits from			MacDurnan	130
	Books of Kells and Lindisfarne	127	$B_4$ .	Attitudes of Horses from Pictish Stones of East Scotland-Edderton, Meigle, Migvie	
B1.	Kells Portraits-Infant Christ, The Virgin,				
	St. Matthew, St. Luke, Angels -	129		also Book of Kell	130
B2.	Types of Celtic Peoples of Britain and				
	Ireland-Kells, Lindisfarne and				
	MacDurnan · · · · ·	129			

#### APPLICATIONS OF CELTIC ART

Plate		Page	Plate		Page
	Introduction	133	20.	Greeting Card adapted from Groudle Stone, Isle of Man	149
1.	Design by Leonardo da Vinci,				
	'Concatenation'	135	21.	Greeting Card adapted from the Rossie Priory Stone	150
2.	Design by Albrecht Dürer, 'Sechs Knoten'	136	22.	The Rossie Priory Stone	151
3.	Design by Michelangelo for Capitol quadrangle, Rome	197	23.	The Aberlemno Stone	152
		-57	24.	The Hilton of Cadboll Stone	153
4.	Bronze champfrein from Torrs, Kirkcudbright	137	25.	The Author sketching the Hunt at the	
5.	Irish Bone Carvings	138		Nigg Stone	154
	The Tracker Bakers Misses	0	.36.	The Rosemarkie Stone	154
θ,	The Trelan Bahow Mirror		27.	The Battersea Shield	155
7.	Doorway, Flaa Church, Hallingdal	138	28.	Detail of designs in King Henry VIII.	
8.	Wire work from Tara Brooch, Ardagh			portrait	156
	Chalice and Buckle from Sutton Hoo -	139	29.	King Henry VIII. by School of Holbein the	
9.	Magazine Cover Design 'Alba'	140		Younger	157
10.	Design for Menu Card	141	30.	Zoomorphic Carpet design	158
11.	Greeting Card, Lindisfarne Birds of		31.	Fireplace Panel	158
	Friendship	142	32.	Contemporary design by girl aged 16 years	159
12.	Céltic Greeting Card	143	33.	Embroidery designed and worked by	
13.	Gaelic New Year Cards—Kells initial 'B'	149		schoolgirls	159
		*45	34.	All over carpet design by the author -	159
14.	'Horse-shoe' Greeting Card, Invertie	144	35.	Group of articles made by the author and	
c				pupils	160
16.	Early British Enamel, Somerset	140	36.	Further group of articles	161
17.	Early British Enamel, Canterbury	146	37.	Bronze Plaque	162
18.	'Doorway' Design for New Year Greeting		38.	Celtic Hunting Carpet	163
	Card			Celtic Art in Knitwear, etc	
19.	Design for Greeting Card	148			
			40.	Bronze Plaque	
				Finis	166



a century, when the author first commenced to apply, for experimental purposes, some of the knowledge of the methods of construction used by the ancient Celtic Artists, that he had then acquired, to the Art Curriculum of the Schools of an area where he was Supervisor of Art, shows that such an opportunity greatly helped him in the production of this book. The ready response of all pupils from infants to higher secondary and evening art schools was remarkable.

To the so-called backward pupils, those who had not been taught how to look and those who had failed to understand how to look at three-dimensional things so that they could be represented by copying the visual facts, the Celtic methods brought the joys of creation and permitted the exercising of individual tastes in arrangements, rhythms, colours and uses, often awakening interests in the ordinary representational forms of art that had chief place in examinations. Some of the results from the schools of that period may be seen in the two full-page illustrations in the section dealing with modern application of Celtic Art.

The co-operation, enthusiasm, untiring energy and taste of Miss Jane Lundie, a teacher of needlework and embroidery, made possible the production of beautiful works by individual and communities of pupils, who, by the conditions that then existed in the Scottish Schools, were mainly girls waiting until they reached the age of 14 to be freed from school.

The author's real interest in Celtic Art began after he had been many years in Art colleges, including a few in the Royal College of Art, London, as a National scholar in drawing and painting. During the whole of his Art student period the study of Celtic Art was distasteful to most Art students, for no instructions could be given. The only way was to attempt to copy an example, so that by comparison no "mistakes" could be found by the teacher, whose knowledge of the subject was merely that of ability to classify it with other Arts by general appearances. Original designs were considered impossible and were rarely attempted. Adapta-

tions by copying was the only use.

That such is still the attitude to this great native art of Britain and Ireland in the system of Art teaching under the guidance of the Education Departments of England, Scotland and Northern Ireland requires no furnishing of proof by the author of this book, unless to state, that the only opposition during the past quarter of a century to his self-imposed attempt to spread a knowledge of the Celtic Art culture amongst the peoples of Britain and Ireland, has been from a few holders of Art College diplomas, that had allowed them to become recognised as teachers of Art. Resenting the introduction of the study of a form of Art of which they knew nothing, except the few copies of fragments that they had been compelled to do for historic ornament examination purposes, they sum up the attempt to make a modern use of the principles of the construction methods of the Celtic Artists, of which they have no knowledge, as useless for "it can only be done by copying."

In contrast to this attitude numerous letters from artists, craftsmen and scholars from all over Britain, Ireland, Europe, Canada, U.S.A., South America, South Africa and Australia have contained congratulations and expressions of sincere interest and best wishes to the endeavour to call attention to the greatness of the Celtic Art cultures of Britain and Ireland. It exceeds his power of words to find expressions for his pleasure when he found that he could attach his studies to those of a small group of the most famous artists since the middle ages, who, during lives of great productivity in many forms of art, had devoted some of it to the study

#### CELTIC ART

of Celtic interlacing knotwork and the Celtic continuous line, the Symbol of "Eternity," Leonardo da Vinci's "Concatenation," Albrecht Dürer's "Sechs Knoten" and Michelangelo's pathway or labyrinth in the quadrangle of the Capitol, Rome, as it was in 1569 are shown in the section of modern and ancient application of Celtic Art.

As a book illustrator from his late 'teens, the author acquired the necessary knowledge of drawing for reproduction that has enabled him to display the materials of this book for the benefit of the enquiring student. During this long period of figure, costume, animal and general illustration work, his constant creative activities (usually without the use of artist's models) required to be kept in good condition, otherwise the result was staleness.

To prevent this the author gave himself a "hobby." It was to find out from examples of Celtic Art, from the Pictish stones, Celtic MSS. etc., the various stages that had been necessary for the designer to produce his completed design on the material. It did not follow that he would always also be the craftsman to complete the work, though he would, by necessity, watch over all of its developments.

A self-imposed restriction was necessary if chaos was to be avoided. That was to keep away from everything else; purposes, meanings, races, religions, etc. for each could become a path from which return would be difficult. This precaution proved to be of great value for it permitted the accumulation of masses of materials, that, as years went by, demanded to be recognised for their meanings, even although it could only be done by guess-work. Later when the publication of some of the work in booklet form commenced, the publisher desired that some of the meanings obtained by conjecture should be given.

After consultation with an eminent prehistorical Archaeologist, his advice to publish the meanings that the evidences suggested was accepted, with the qualification that if others could bring evidences to prove other meanings, agreement to such would benefit truth. In such a way, the art which was communicative and ornamental might regain its original communicative purpose.

A few months after the publication of some of the series of booklets, the author received among other congratulatory letters one from Dr. Ananda Coomaraswamy of the Boston Museum of Fine Arts who was perhaps the foremost scholar of Asiatic and Eastern Mediterranaen Art and Literature, giving proofs of the correctness of the guesses, with quotations

from the early Vedic literature and other Asiatic sources of information. Dr. Coomaraswamy continued to correspond with the author, whom he supplied with copies of the engraved plates of interlacing knotwork designs by Leonardo da Vinci and Albrecht Dürer and a publication by him concerning these works. The author gave to him Michelangelo's design of the continuous pathway for the quadrangle of the Capitol, Rome and drawings to show the application of Leonardo's and Dürer's designs to the garments and hangings in the portrait of Henry the Eight by the School of Holbein the Younger.

Death has removed this very important contact and source of confirmation and information in the problems of the beginnings of the great art of the Celts in which he was greatly interested. He affirmed that its beginnings were mainly Asiatic and that its primary use was philological. Two of his letters are included in this book. The dual-purpose of Celtic Art was retained throughout the whole of its development cumulating in its use as sacred embellishments for the world's greatest manuscript *The Book of Kells*.

In common with other Asiatic peoples where the Art of the Celt had beginnings thousands of years before Christ, representations of the works of the Almighty Creator were forbidden and have continued to be in some degrees with certain peoples to the present time.

By the laws of the recapitulation of the life history of the species in the life of the individual, "Modern Art" is sometimes a form of atavistic groping and the tendency of some European artists, when the power of realistic representation has been attained is to no longer accept this as the final achievement of Art. The inability to change is death in Art; the power to change is life. The atavistic searchings of the modern European artist are merely the reversions to the mental traits of remote ancestors rather than immediate progenitors. Hence such gropings, usually done in a state of acute consciousness, lead subconsciously to abstractions that may be inherited racial memories of the great Celtic cultures and of the still earlier race of palaeolithic Aurignacian hunter-artists who were probably the first of modern European man.

Picasso passed through the natural stages of an art development in an artistic environment, led by his own desires and achievements from infancy with the result that by the age of sixteen years he had acquired full maturity of draughtsmanship and painting in the manner of the impressionist school that had then gained recognition after years of condemnation and opposition. What could he do for the rest of his life? Many others had reached maturity in their early youth in the kind of drawing and painting that was recognised at the time.

Michelangelo, Raphael and others did so and each found that there was much to change in Art to carry it to greater heights. The Scottish painter MacTaggart and his countryman Peploe changed their desires and manners of representing them throughout their whole lives. Picasso's early art life had been devoted to realism in all of its hitherto accepted forms and the new revelations of impressionism had crowned it with an understanding of atmosphere, colour juxtaposition, selection, light, movement, suggestion and many new forms of painter's technique that all together gave new life and yet another aspect of the realism of which Picasso was a master. It was unthinkable that this was to be the end-all of his art. Duty to art is partly religion to such artists who will deliberately set aside all that they had previously valued in search of the change that must exist to allow art to live.

Sir John Millais reached maturity about the same early age in the manner of draughts-manship and painting that had then gained recognition in England. Millais's development in art had then come to its end. He felt justified in using the skill that he had acquired, to paint for the remainder of his life, the subject pictures and portraits that met popular and fashionable approval, with the result that he became more adept in completing the numerous commissions that occupied the rest of his lifetime.

There are many artists whose works fall into the same categories as those of Picasso and Millais. Fortunately the imitation of the skill and art knowledge that made possible the productions of Millais, could only be attempted by persons possessing similar talents and skill that had resulted from years of hard study and practice.

It was not so with Picasso's productions after his eschewal of realism. The merest novice may now by-pass all ordinary art study and with effrontery, because of Picasso and others, claim protection for anything he cares to do, with full support of bewildered press representatives. Hence there are legions of imposters who vie with each other to attract attention to their eccentricities and vulgarities.

To return to the subject, after these digressions that on the surface may appear to have no connection with it, the author states that Picasso and the other present day great artists who have forsaken realism in most of its

forms have no knowledge of the methods of construction necessary for some forms of Celtic Art though their searchings have penetrated into the regions of Celtic abstract representations of the creations by the Almighty, that conveyed facts concerning them without copying them. Recreation of the kind contained in the Celtic methods of construction will be beneficial to most artists whose works are creative. It is so much removed from the methods required for other forms of creative art, that it may serve to banish staleness. As stated elsewhere, the absentminded or otherwise mentally engaged educated doodler, the child and the uneducated female with pipe-clay decorations on the doorstep are merely giving way, subconsciously to atavistic tendencies with beginnings at the dawn of human appreciation that later took forms through the intellects and tastes of Celtic progenitors.

When some of the methods of the Celt as shown in this book have been assimilated, the various stages appear in an entirely different perspective and things happen with the ease that a mouth opens when a spoon is raised to it. Instruction is not necessary to know which muscles are to be used and how and when. The ancient artists, of necessity, must have arrived at stages in the uses of their art that have not yet suggested their existence to the author, although he has no longer to consider a few of the stages that were so necessary at the beginning.

The great Celtic artists must have had the power of visualising beforehand a completed work in its final state and materials. That ability, as in all forms of art, has to be acquired by experience. The fact that there are no apparent difficult structural problems in some forms of Celtic patterns or in the formations of the so-called Pictish symbols is the explanation of their absence in this book.

Some of these unique examples of Celtic pagan religious symbols are to be found nowhere else in Europe, Britain or Ireland except in Scotland and mainly in the north-east. They are often single or in groups on otherwise unornamented stones, and are also found with additional embellishments of matured patterns of knotwork, keys and spirals on a few of the finest examples of the richly ornamented cross slab-stones. They are not to be found in the Celtic MSS. of Durrow, Kells and Lindisfarne although these have every other form of the Pictish Celtic Art.

Their chief purpose was undoubtedly philological and connected with religion. The author has read much concerning them and

#### CELTIC ART

what they may signify and he has given much thought to their purposes and meanings, yet he has formed no opinion concerning them other than that the answers may be found in the beginnings of Asiatic religions. He had hoped to get some light and information on this subject from Dr. Coomaraswamy to whom he had sent a complete set of drawings, with the intention of including them and any information concerning them in this book, but unfortunately death intervened. The opinions held by some that these symbols are all, in one way or another, connected with phallic worship is as unthinkable to the author in regards to the Celtic Pagan Rites as it is to those of Christianity.

That this book may help to provide materials that will make possible the opportunity to use again the methods of this great British art for new achievements and to modern applications in art and industry is the chief motive of its author and publisher. It is a further wish that it may arouse interest in the other numerous co-eval cultures of the British Celts without which this great art culture would have been impossible and so eventually lead to a placing, historically, of the Britons along with the very highest civilized nations of all times, where they belong, if by art alone.

The unique methods of construction and the motifs of the British and Irish schools of Celtic Art as shown herein by pictorial demonstrations of good examples are for the use of artists, art-craft workers and designers in industry. Many of these demonstrations do not require wordy explanations or arguments. They prove themselves conclusively like theorems and are capable of endless varieties from simple beginnings and have possibilities of further developments by new methods of the mathematical formulae and geometrical skill that produced such great achievements of Celtic Art over a thousand years ago.

A knowledge of these methods will shed a new light upon many problems concerning the Celts in Britain and Ireland. They will reveal many falsehoods that should no longer be taught as the history of Britain or Ireland. It is not the intention to deal with these in this book, yet the complete absence of references to what the evidences in the art can prove, may suggest to the perceptive student that the author is ignorant of the implications.

The term Pictish is used throughout this book to describe the Cruithne, the ancient Britons whose art owed much of its perfection and beauty to the uses of mathematical formulae for construction. The finest examples of orna-

mented stone monuments, metal work and jewellery have been found in the areas of Britain and Ireland that had, at one time, been inhabited by the "Cruithne." The term is now applied to some of the Britons of the parts of Scotland beyond the Roman Walls where some southern tribes of Britons, rather than submit to Roman rule joined and merged with the northern Britons, who, before the Roman invasion had also peopled a part of Northern Ireland.

The nickname Pict given by the Roman soldiery to these northern Britons was a descriptive one. It referred to fondness for colours as a characteristic and to their amazing skill in firing enamel colours on metal ornaments for the warrior, his horse and chariot. In battle, the Britons, for unhampered movements, discarded all clothing and decorated their bodies in colours with tribal symbols, charms and patterns.

The ornaments in the Books of Durrow, Kells, Lindisfarne, St. Chad, MacRegol, and MacDurnan are similar to those of the Pictish ornamented stones of the east coast of Britain from Durham to Shetland and to the ornamented stones in the Pictish area of North Ireland. In the remaining parts of Britain and Ireland the Celtic ornaments of the stone monuments are different and belong to a variety of schools of Celtic Art. A few fragments, that survived the thoroughness of Augustine and his Church in the carrying out of the order of Pope Gregory the Great to completely destroy the early British Celtic Christian Church, are evidences that the Picts returned to the midlands of England after the fall of Rome. The political purpose of the Synod of Whitby was to give the glory of the civilizing and Christianizing of the "Savage Britons" to the Church of St. Peter.

In Iona and the West of Scotland, late Romanesque forms of Celtic Art, that are not included in this book receive homage from Pilgrims as relics of the beginning of Christianity in Scotland. Tradition has it, that in Iona and district over 200 Pictish ornamented cross slab-stones were destroyed and flung into the sea. That Columba had nothing to do with the making of the "Book of Kells" or the ornamented cross slab-stones on the east of the mountain range of Scotland can be proved by the study of the methods of construction of Celtic (Pictish) Art. "The calf may belong to the cow and the copy of the book to the original (the verdict of the judge who tried Columba for making a copy of a borrowed book and claiming to be the owner of that copy, this

#### CELTIC ART

being one of the reasons that compelled Columba to leave Ireland) but the ornaments on the stones in Iona attributed to Columba's mission do not belong to those of the Books of Kells, Durrow and Lindisfarne. Those on the Pictish stones of east Scotland and some in north-east England have ornaments identical to those in the Books.

There is no other evidence to support the opposite view apart from what has been built upon the statements in the Life of Columba (with no references to the Art) written by Adamnan a successor of Columba in the Iona Mission about a hundred years after his death, who became a fervid worker for the Augustine Church of St. Peter. When Columba came to Iona he did excellent work from there in the West of Scotland in continuing the work of his

Christian predecessors in these areas. His greatest misfortune was to have his biography written by Adamnan.

In the light of our new knowledge of Celtic culture, the old picture will no longer satisfy of the hairy savage, smeared in woad, so beloved of British educationists intent on proving that only imported cultures and forms of governments have made it possible for us to reach our present cultural level from such primitive beginnings. When this inadequate impression of our British ancestors, who fought so bravely against the aggressive conquest of Rome is eventually corrected through the accumulation of greater knowledge, then, indeed may we mark the commencement of a new era for the British race.



## Correspondence from Dr. Ananda K. Coomaraswamy

MUSEUM OF FINE ARTS,
BOSTON 15, MASSACHUSETTS,
February 26th, 1947.

DEAR MR. BAIN,

I have been a curator in this Museum for 30 years. I have seen with a great deal of pleasure your excellent booklets on Celtic Art (the first two only; and am sending you separately a paper of mine published in the Art Quarterly which will interest you and perhaps suggest the meaning of the "continuity" that you speak of. I would suggest that you look up certain of my references, especially Ringborn mentioned in Note 45 and Guénon mentioned in Note 49. The discussion on safetypins (fibulae) referred to in Note 46 is now more easily avail able in my Figures of Speech or Figures of Thought published last year by Luzac, London.

For the outline mazes in Malekula and India see also Layard in Folklore 47 (1936) and in Folklore 48 (1937).

Yours very truly,

A. K. COOMARASWAMY.

Museum of Fine Arts,
Boston, Massachusetts,
June 13th, 1947.

DEAR MR. BAIN,

Many thanks for your letter of May 24th. I have asked Luzac to send you a copy of my Figures of Speech or Figures of Thought for your library.

Regarding your Alesund design, the two birds are correctly thought of as a symbol of friendship in the highest sense, that is to say of friendship between the inner and outer man, or spirit and soul in everyman, hence of friendship in general, since in the truest sense "Charity begins at home." You may often have observed the two birds on a tree in traditional design; sometimes also united, so that we have the bird with one body and two heads. In the Rgveda (1-164-20) and Mundaka Upanisad (111-1-2) they represent the universal and individualised selves (true self and Ego)—(that duo sunt in homine is universal doctrine, Hindu, Islamic, and Christian). The resolution of internal conflict, or self-integration is the purpose of all true psychology—"This self lends itself to that self, and that self to this self; they coalesce (or are wedded together). With this aspect he is united with this world and with that aspect united with yonder world "(Aitaremya Aranyake 2-3-17).\*

Mrs. Goble (of Godalming) lately made a wood cut of the two birds on a spray, intentionally illustrating the Vedic idea.

The Upanisad passage begins "Two birds, fast bound companions, clasp close the selfsame tree" (the tree of life) of also Philo Judaeus, quis heres, 126.

Very sincerely,

Ananda K. Coomaraswamy.

\*Ephesians 2-15 "to make of himself of twain one new man, so making peace."

HIS elementary text book is prepared specially for use in elementary and secondary schools. It will also serve to give instruction to Art Students, Artists and Art workers in a multitude of crafts. There is much that will be useful to the archæologist and the historian, although I have refrained from dealing with such problems, for the primary purpose of this book is to give to others the results of my many years of research into the methods used by the ancient artists. In a larger work on the more advanced methods of the Celtic Art worker and his various media, I give my own conclusions and the evidences on which they are founded and their bearing upon historical, archæological and racial matters.

Realising the meagreness of the written language, especially when used by me as a medium for the clear transmitting of instructions on the partly artistic, partly geometrical and partly mathematical method peculiar to many forms of Celtic Art and particularly to that of the Pictish School, I have put the onus of understanding upon the student by compelling the close observation of every stage of the methods with very few words to hinder or to assist. Many years of experimenting have led me to believe that when once this slight initial difficulty has been overcome in this manner of reading, to dispense with words is beneficial. There are a few important rules. The first and most important is that in the creation of a Celtic design, each stage must be completed throughout the design, before the next one is commenced, otherwise confusion will result. After the methods shown on a plate have been assimilated, original designs by the same methods should be attempted and the ultimate aim should be the application to some form of craftwork.

The mere copying of the ancient work is as valueless as it is impossible, but by understanding the methods, new designs and even new methods in this peculiar art may be produced. If the methods and their stages that are shown in this book are not those used by the ancients, then they can only prove to have been simpler,

perhaps more ingenious but not more difficult. With genuine humility gained by years of research into the possible methods of the great intellectual artists and craftsmen of the Pictish nation, who produced the great art of the crossslab stones of East Pictland and their counterparts in the Books of Durrow, Kells, and Lindisfarne, the Tara Brooch, the Ardagh Chalice and other masterpieces of the Celtic jewellers' art, I present the results of my studies, particularly to the inhabitants of the Highlands and Islands of Scotland and of Ireland in the belief that with an understanding of the ingenious and simple mathematical basis of the art of their ancestors, a great national art may be re-born to make fresh growths and thus influence and enrich the lives of the people. The extreme minuteness of the art of the MSS. and the impossibility of ordinary eyes perceiving much of its contents show, conclusively, that the artists did not display their skill for human eyes and human applause.

They were imbued with the idea that the eyes of God would detect errors and that they

worked solely to glorify Him.

Their aids to eyesight and the tools that enabled them to draw lines with an exactness beyond the skill of moderns may never be known. Referring to a page of the "Book of Armagh," Professor J. O. Westwood wrote, "In a space of about a quarter of an inch superficial, I counted with a magnifying glass no less than one hundred and fifty-eight interlacements of a slender ribbon pattern formed of white lines edged with black ones upon a black ground. No wonder that tradition should allege that these unerring lines should have been traced by angels." One of the aims of this book is to show that there is nothing marvellous in a design having not a single irregular interlacement. Indeed a wrong interlacement would be an impossibility to a designer conversant with the methods. One might as well marvel at a piece of knitting that had not a mistake in its looping. This does not retract from the marvellous inventive skill and art of the Pictish designers. The beauty of their art

#### CELTIC ART

would be unaltered whatever the scale although that of many of its details would certainly be

more perceptible if enlarged.

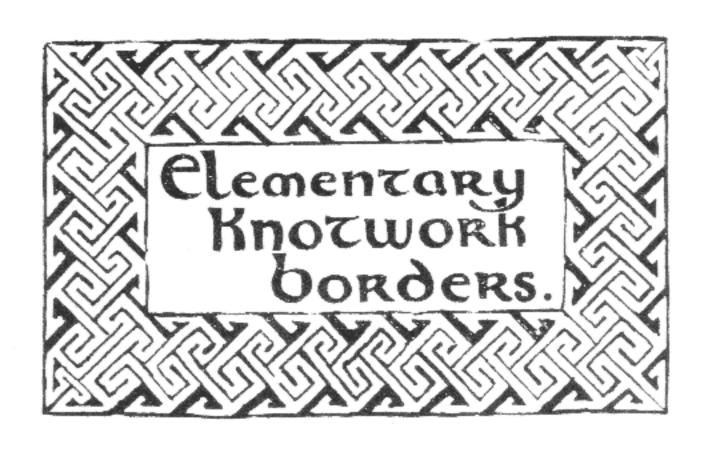
When I compare the little that I have found out during all these years of study with that of which I know nothing, my only source of satisfaction is that my work may show the way to an aspect of the art of the Celtic peoples, that has hitherto been unexplored, although some previous searchers found keys to open some of its doors and thus allowed me to enter. I pay tribute to the great work of J. Romilly Allen, the original pioneer of this form of research. Others including Eoghan Carmichael, John Duncan and Dr. Galbraith of Dingwall have kept his lamp burning and passed it on to me. In "My Schools and Schoolmasters," chap. xi, Hugh Miller, the geologist, writes about his poor consumptive friend, the housepainter's apprentice, William Ross, in the Parish of Nigg, who "anticipated the labours of our Antiquarian Societies by his elaborate and truthful drawings of an interesting class of National Antiquities' (the Nigg, Shandwick, Hilton of Cadboll and other cross-slab stones) and "looking with the eyes of the stone cutter at his preliminary sketches, from the first meagre lines that formed the ground work of some involved and difficult

knot, to the elaborate knot itself," Miller felt that with such a series of drawings before him he, also, "could learn the complex ancient style in less than a fortnight." Poor William Ross, of whose works nothing has survived but these words by his friend Hugh Miller, must be numbered among the real pioneers. Westwood, Robinson, Anderson and others have gathered much material that has assisted research. The "Studio" publication of a number of the best pages of the "Book of Kells" in colours and the British Museum photographic reproduction of parts of the "Book of Lindisfarne," edited by Dr. Eric Miller, Keeper of MSS., are works of immense value. The Spalding Club's publication "The Ancient Sculptured Stones of Scotland," edited by John Stuart, owes much of its value to the excellent drawings by A. Gibb of Aberdeen. Most of the drawings by P. A. Jastresbski in the same volumes, should never have been published, for the artist had no knowledge of what he tried to represent. In expressing gratitude to all past and present scholars for the contributions they have made, I feel assured that in the near future a multitude of gifted workers will clear up most of the problems that in the meantime hide this and other great cultures of the Pictish People.

GEORGE BAIN.

September, 1945.







.

.

### Elementary Knotwork Borders and Panels

HE Chronology of the ornamental symbols commences with spirals. Chevrons and step patterns make an early appearance, along with key patterns that are really spirals in straight lines. Interlacings arrive later and are followed by knotwork interlacings. The imitation of the three dimensional arts of plaiting, weaving and basketry is the beginning of interlacing and there are few races who have not used it as a decoration for stone, wood and metal. The last phase of its use is that of the scribe who represented the third dimension by painted outlines and dark backgrounds. Knotwork interlacings are peculiar to the Pictish School of Celtic Art. Though this text book is concerned with the problems of the constructional methods of the Pictish artist-craftsman, and all other aspects of his art are reserved for another book, yet reference may be justifiable here to the similarity of the types of key patterns, requiring great geometrical and mathematical skill, that have been found in the Ukraine and Yugo-Slavia dating from 20,000 B.C. to 15,000 B.C. to those of the Pictish School. Many centuries lie between the earliest gropings and the high standard of achievement at this stated period. The imitation of the works of God was forbidden to many races and until the Christian Era even vegetation was tabooed as a motif for ornament to the Pict, hence his concentration upon geometry, mathematics and abstractions that were not copies of created life. Interlacing borders and panels based upon plaiting and basketry are to be found in the art of most peoples surrounding the Mediterranean, the Black and the Caspian Seas. Egyptians, Greeks, Romans, Byzantines, Moors, Persians, Turks, Arabs, Syrians, Hebrews and North African tribes have used this form of ornament in some way or other. A few thousand years B.C. the

Chinese used small interlacing symbols. The finest achievement of knotwork interlacing are by the Pictish School. Interlacing limbs and bodies of humans, animals, birds and reptiles each with interlacing top-knots were developed in East Pictland and in Ireland to migrate at a later date to Scandinavia to become a decadent art.

As a symbol of continuity, interlacing knotwork is found on the ornamented cross slabstones of East Pictland from Durham to Shetland and in the metal work and the earlier MSS. of Durrow and Kells. Continuity of interlacing knotwork is not insisted upon in the later period of the Lindisfarne and St. Chad MSS, and in the stone work of the same school. From Perthshire to Caithness there are many beautiful examples of intentional continuity of knotwork that form part of artist-sculptors' creations. Other stones show that the designers entrusted the carving to workmen who blundered, and there are a few stones by untrained designers and inferior carvers. The art of Iona and the West of Scotland is a Romanesque Celtic similar to the stone monuments of Ireland with the exception of the Irish Pictish work of the North-East. The work of Scotland east of Drumalban is similar to the finest of the MSS. Durrow, Kells and Lindisfarne. Different localities have different treatments: An incised line in the middle of the band was the fashion from Durham to St. Andrews. In Cumberland, Westmoreland and south-west Scotland the tendency was to break the plaiting into interlacing rings. Wales and the Midlands around Wolverhampton must be considered as greatly influenced by, if not part of, the Pictish School. The "St. Andrew's Cross" is the beginning of most circular knotwork of the Scottish and Irish Pictish interlacing panels. Interlacing knotwork is sometimes inspired by spirals and is sometimes in straight lines.

		•		

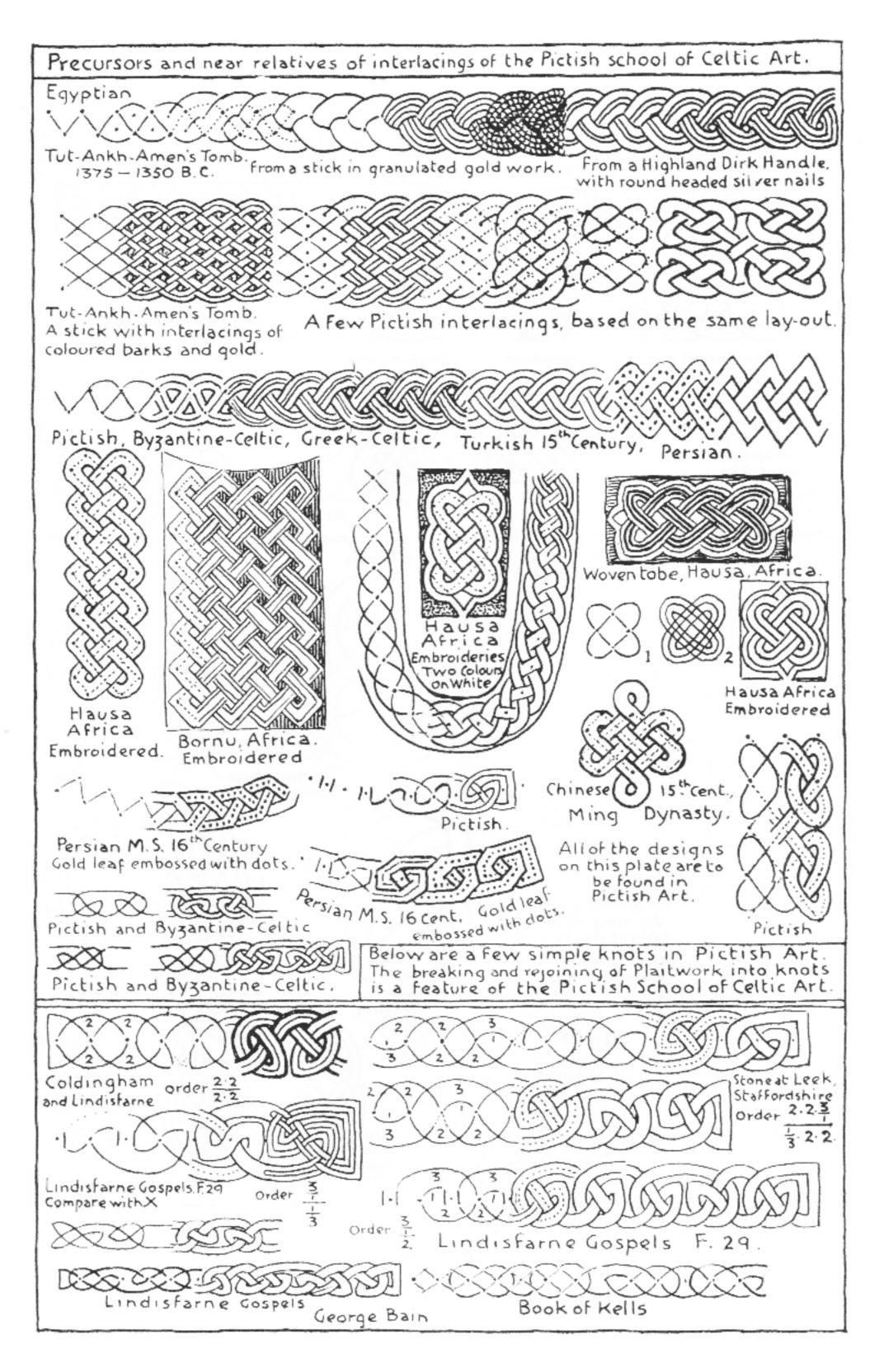


Plate A

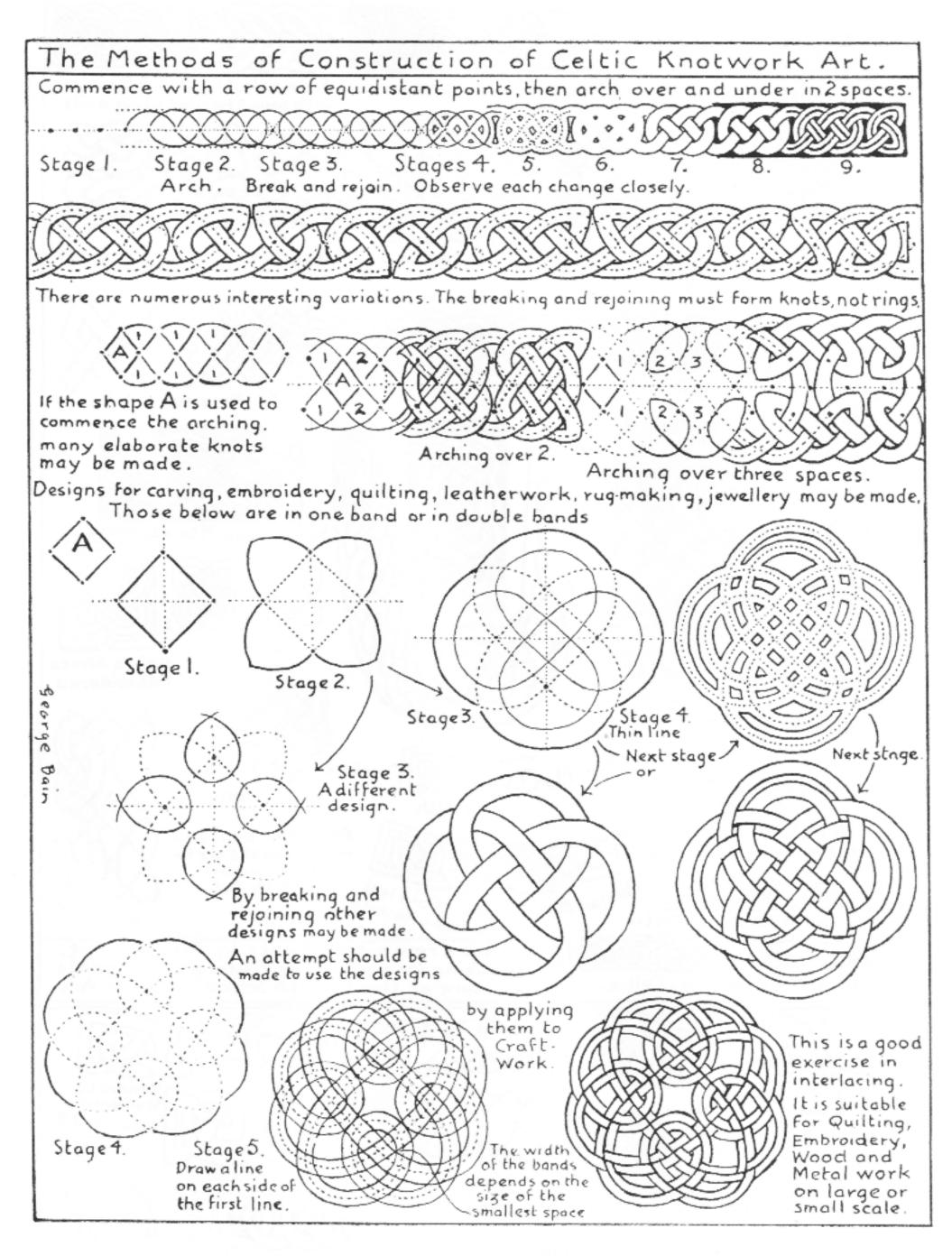
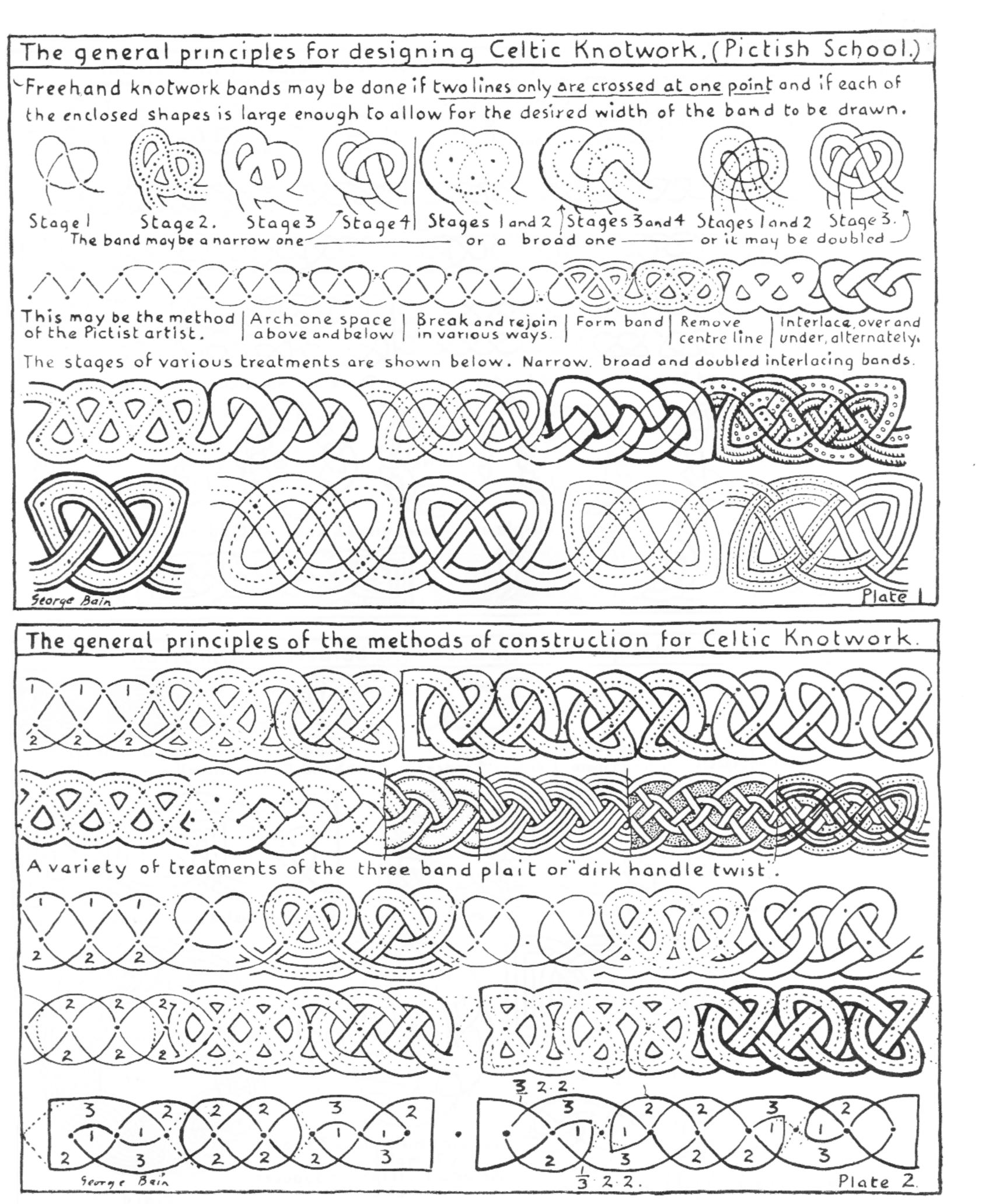
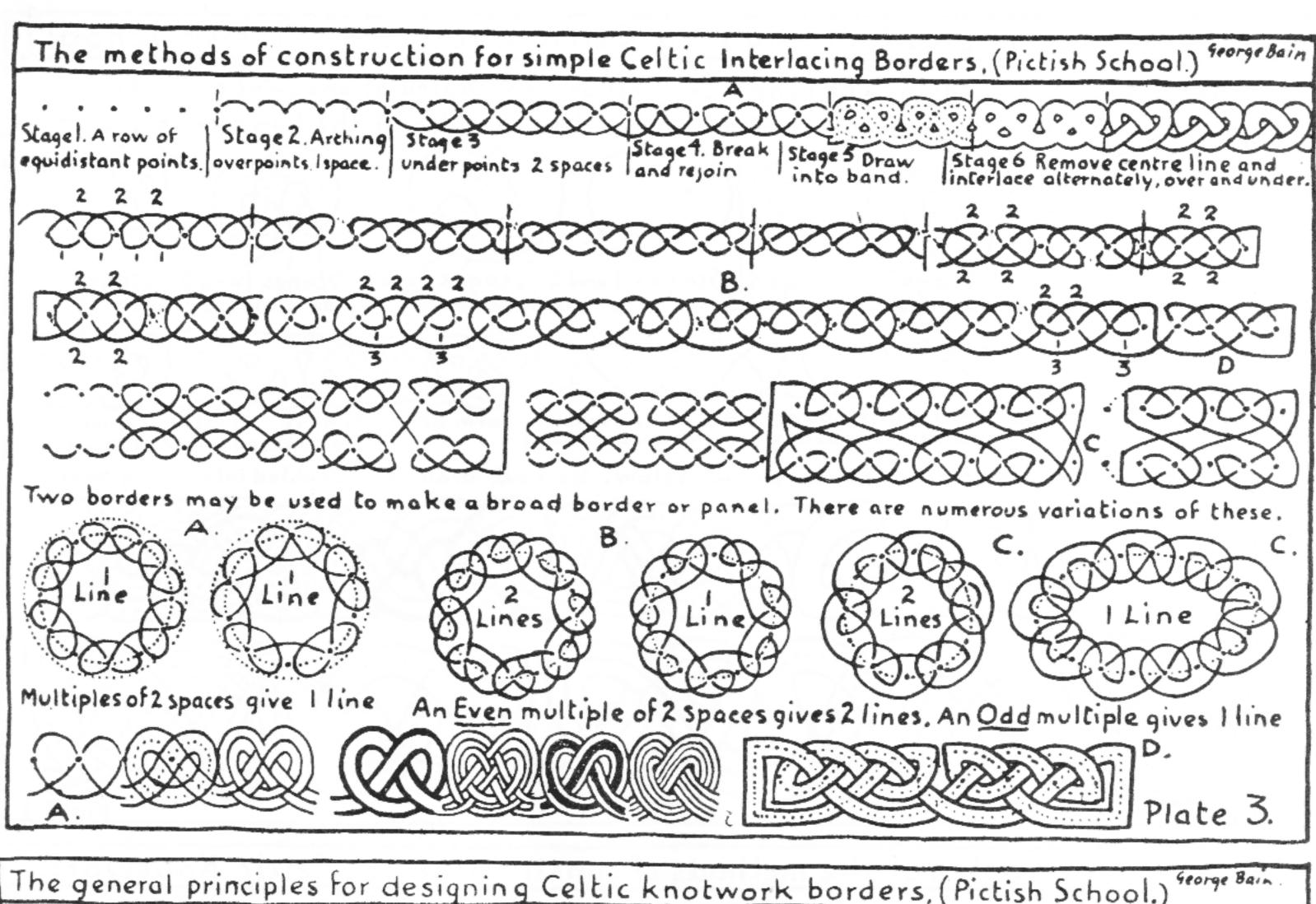
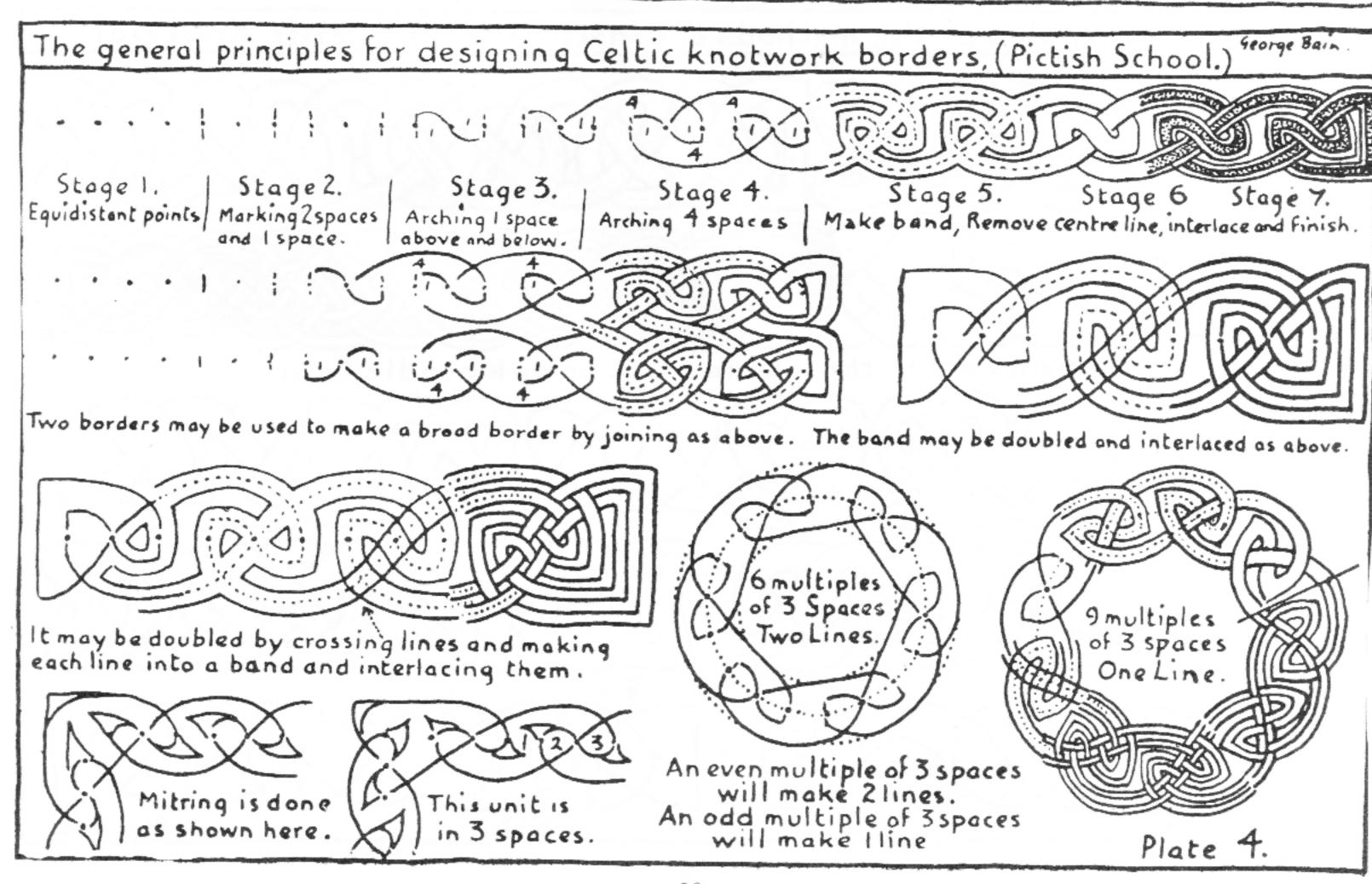
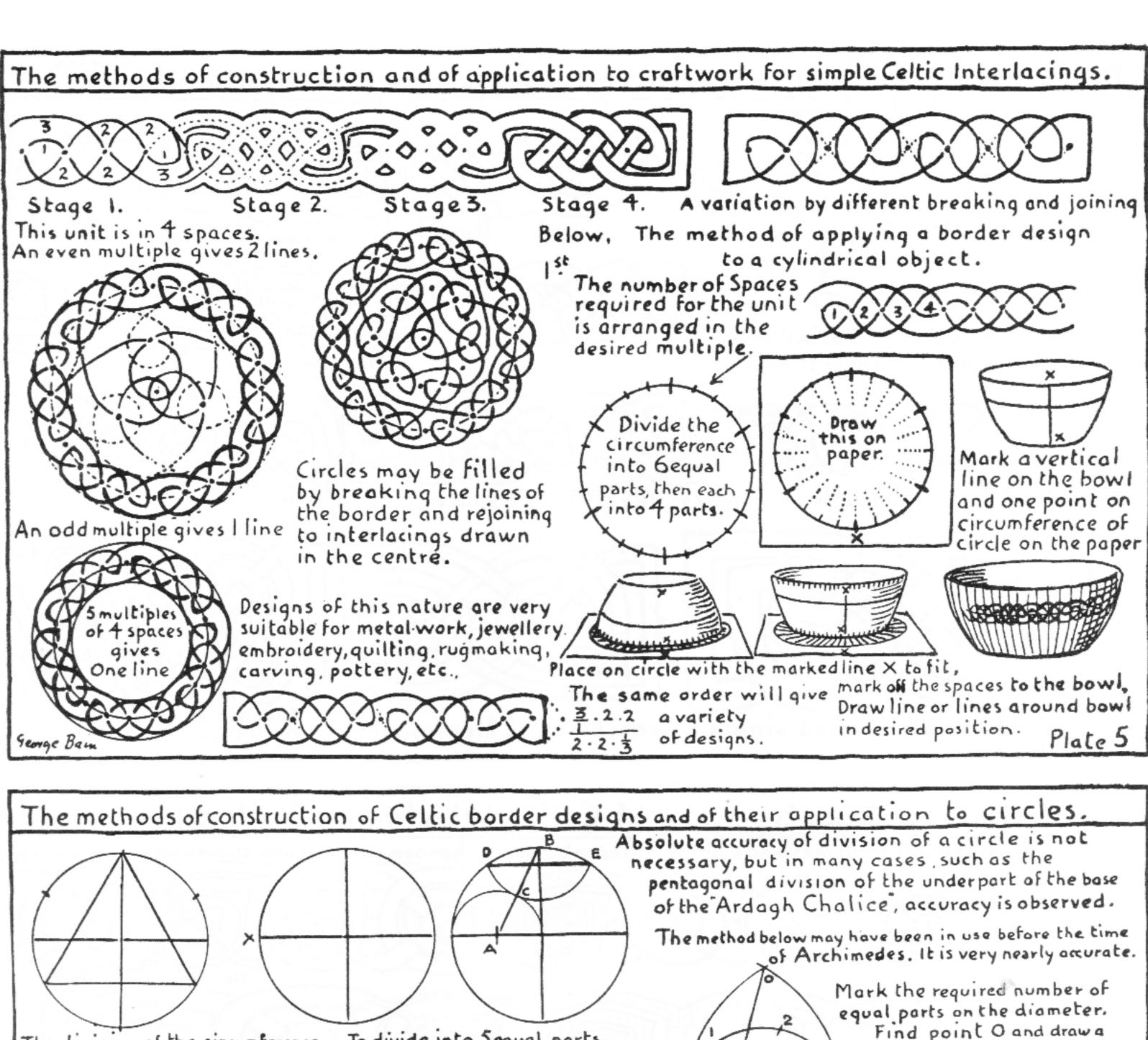


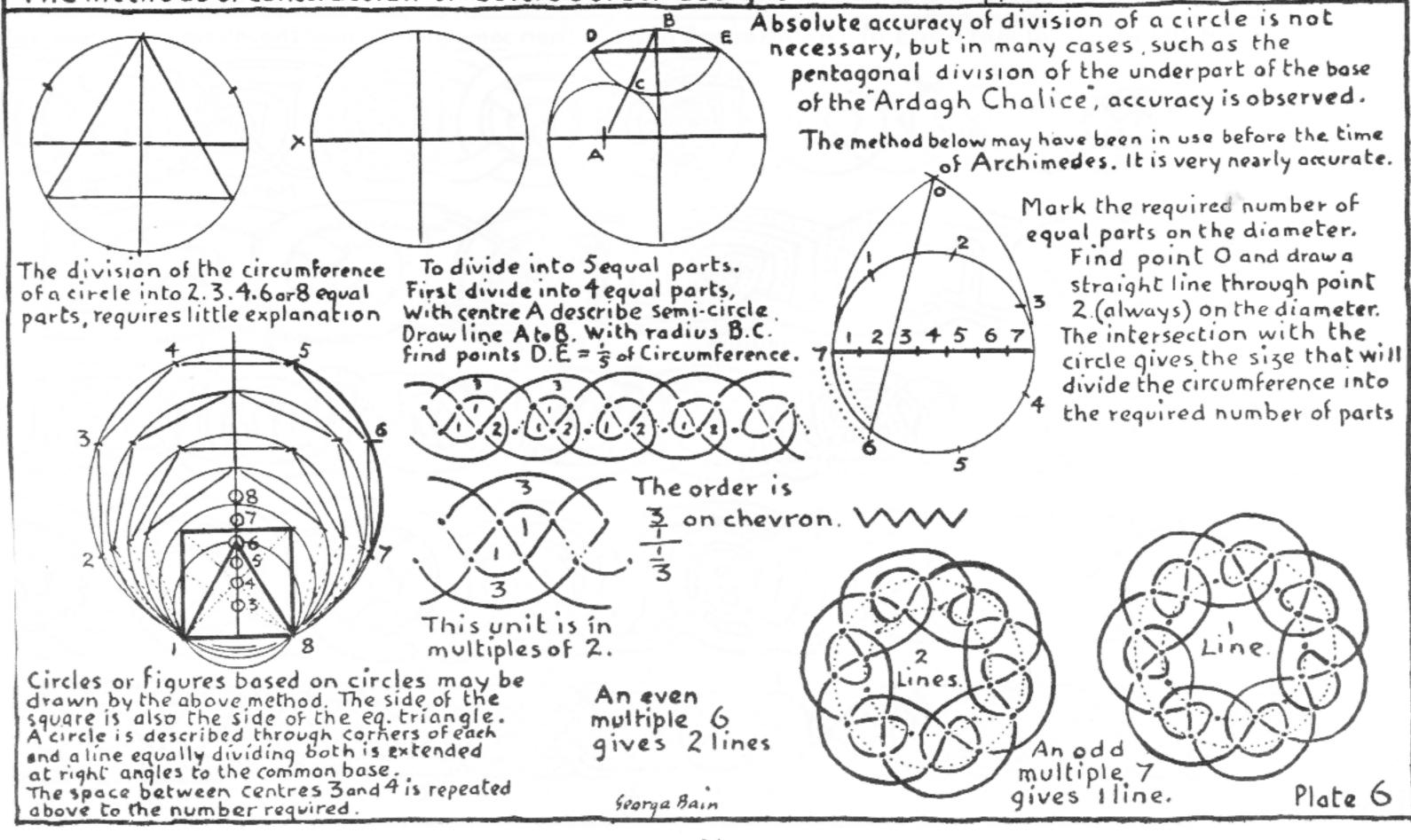
Plate B

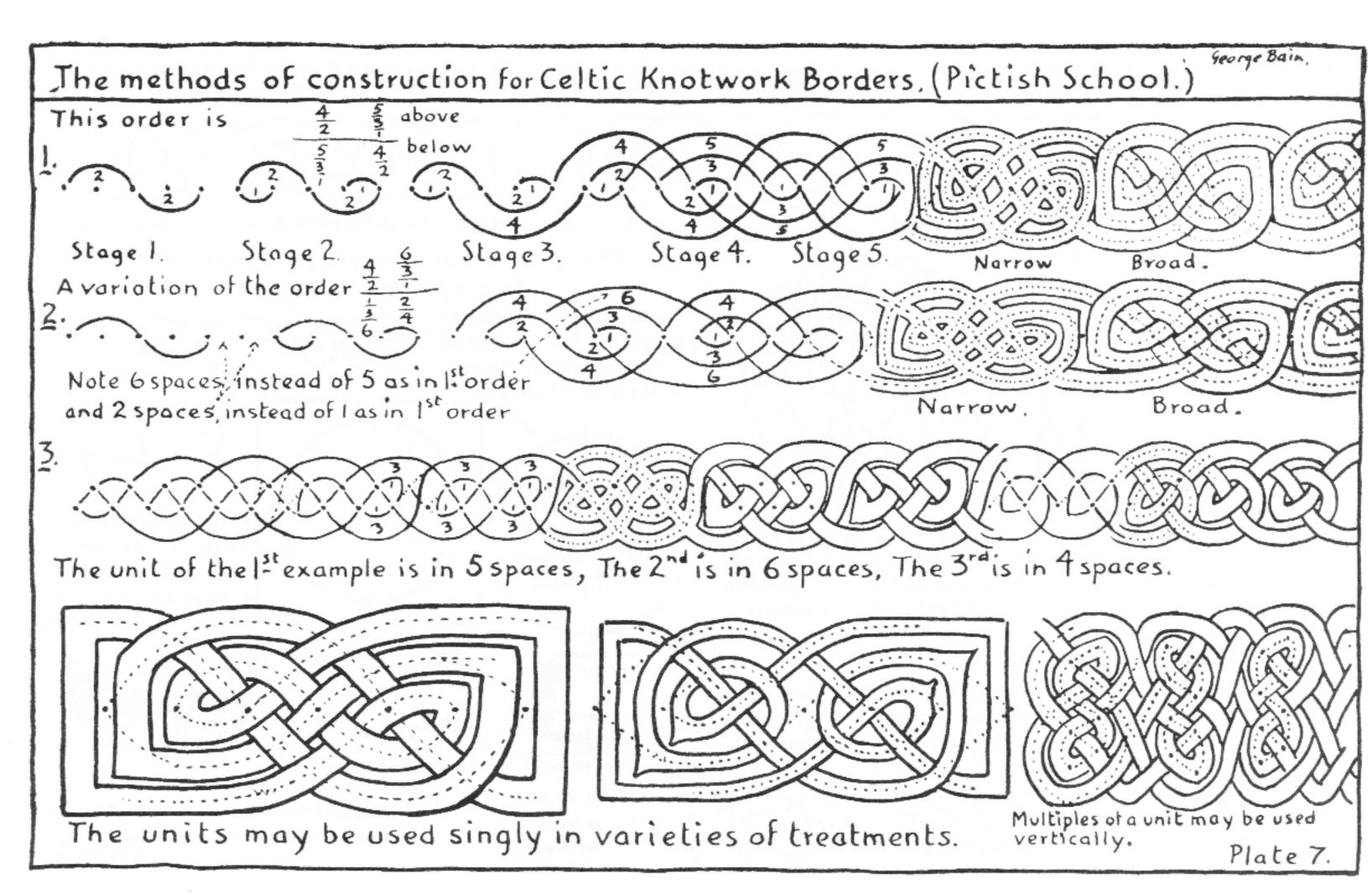


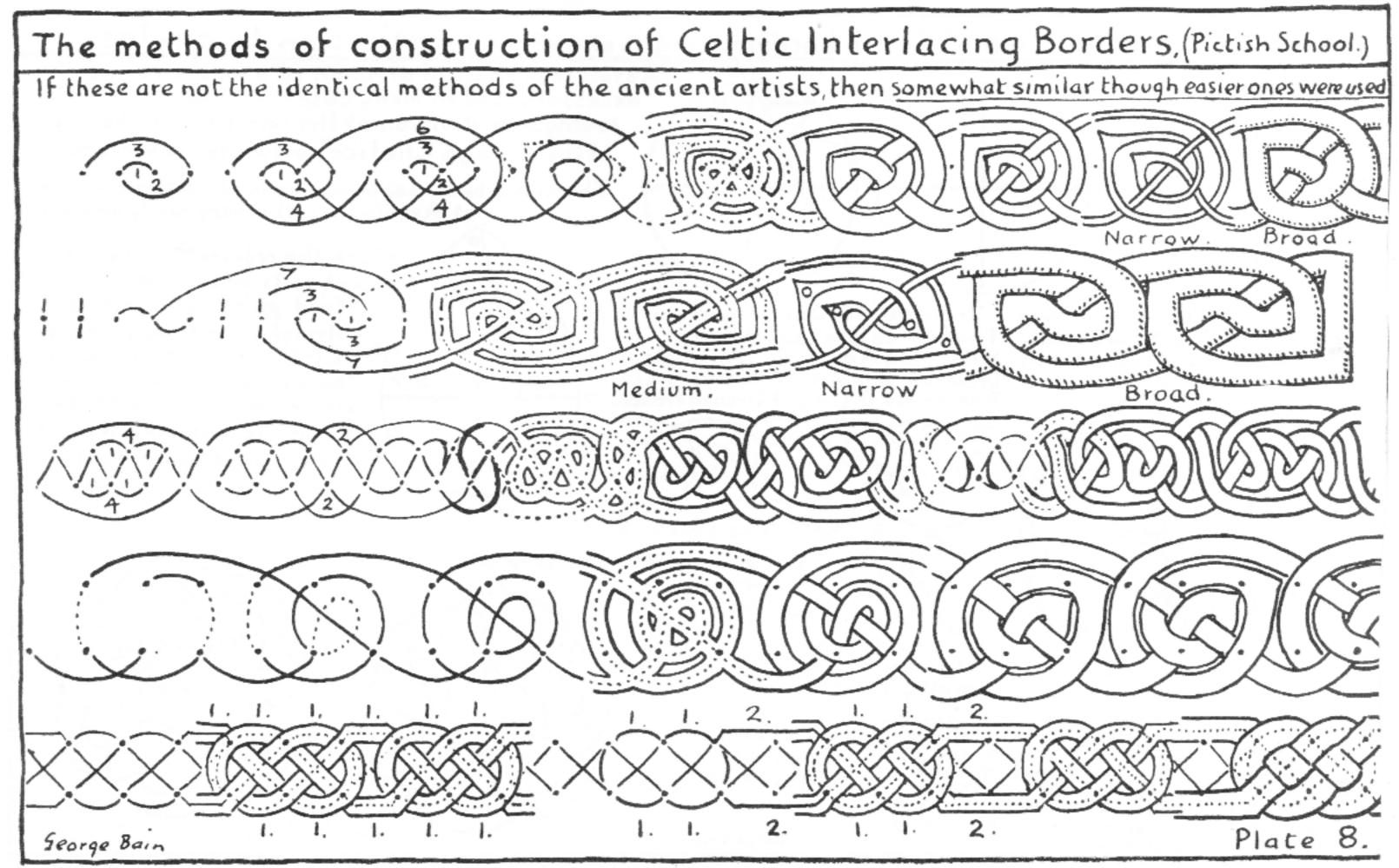


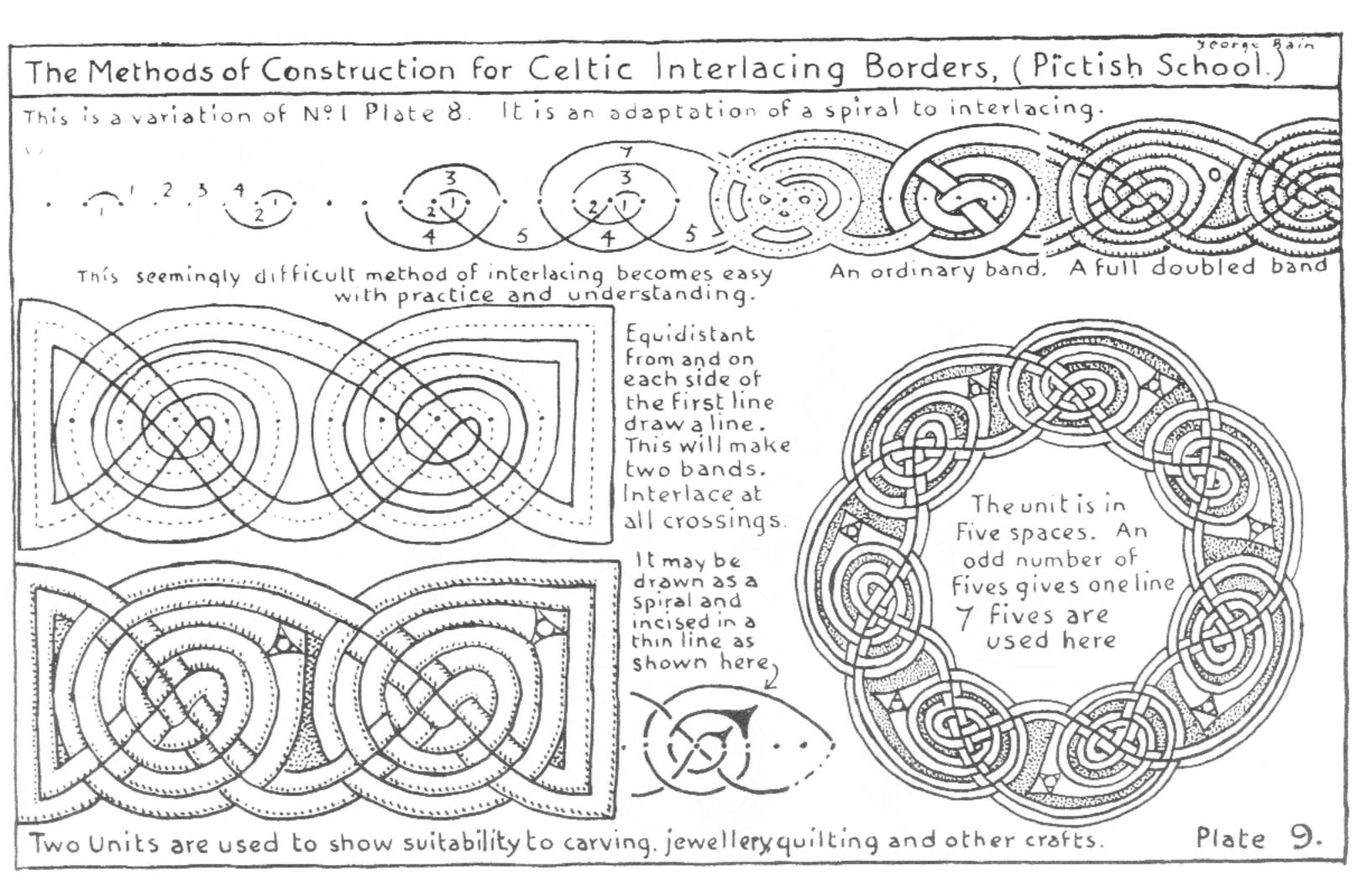


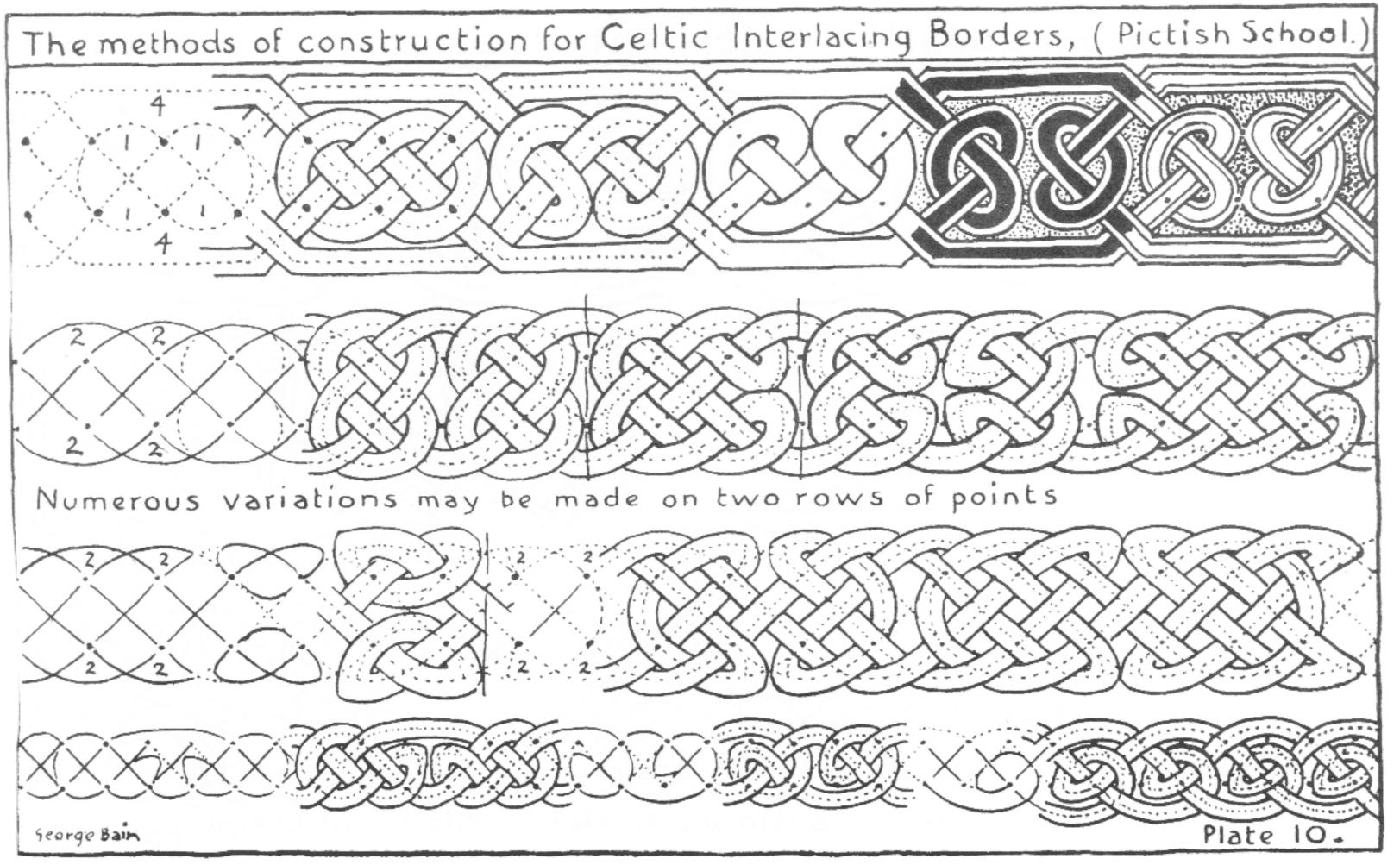


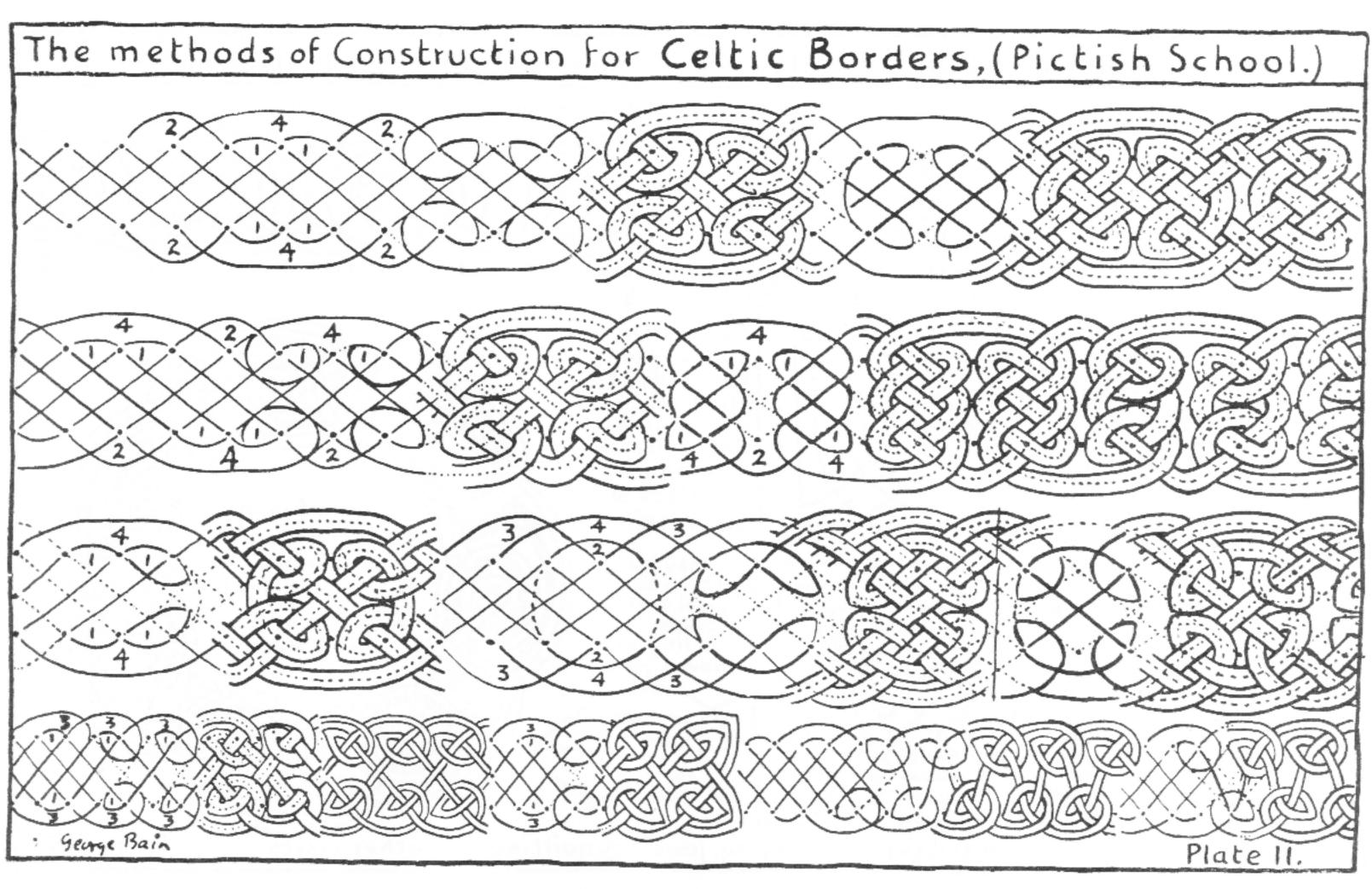


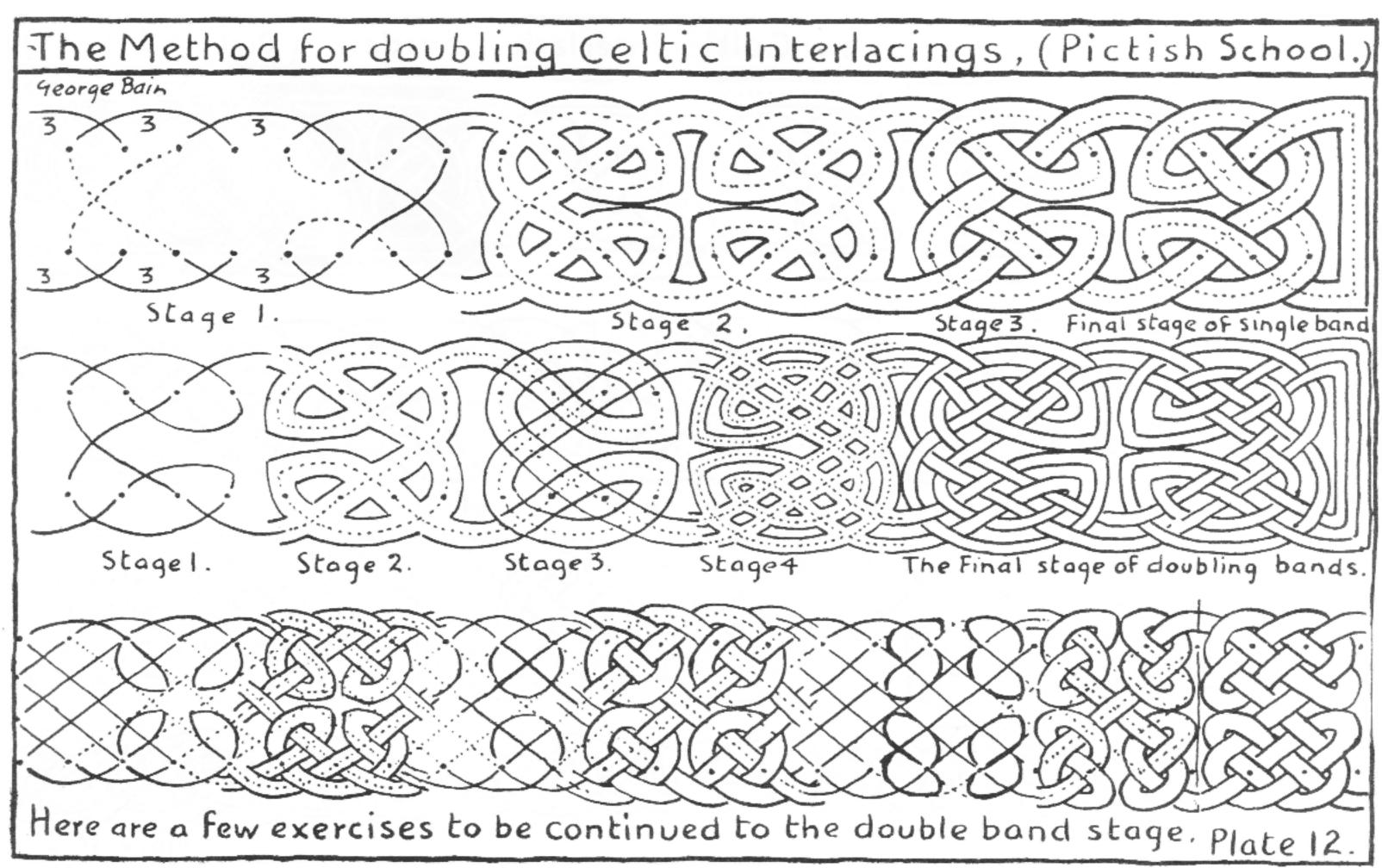


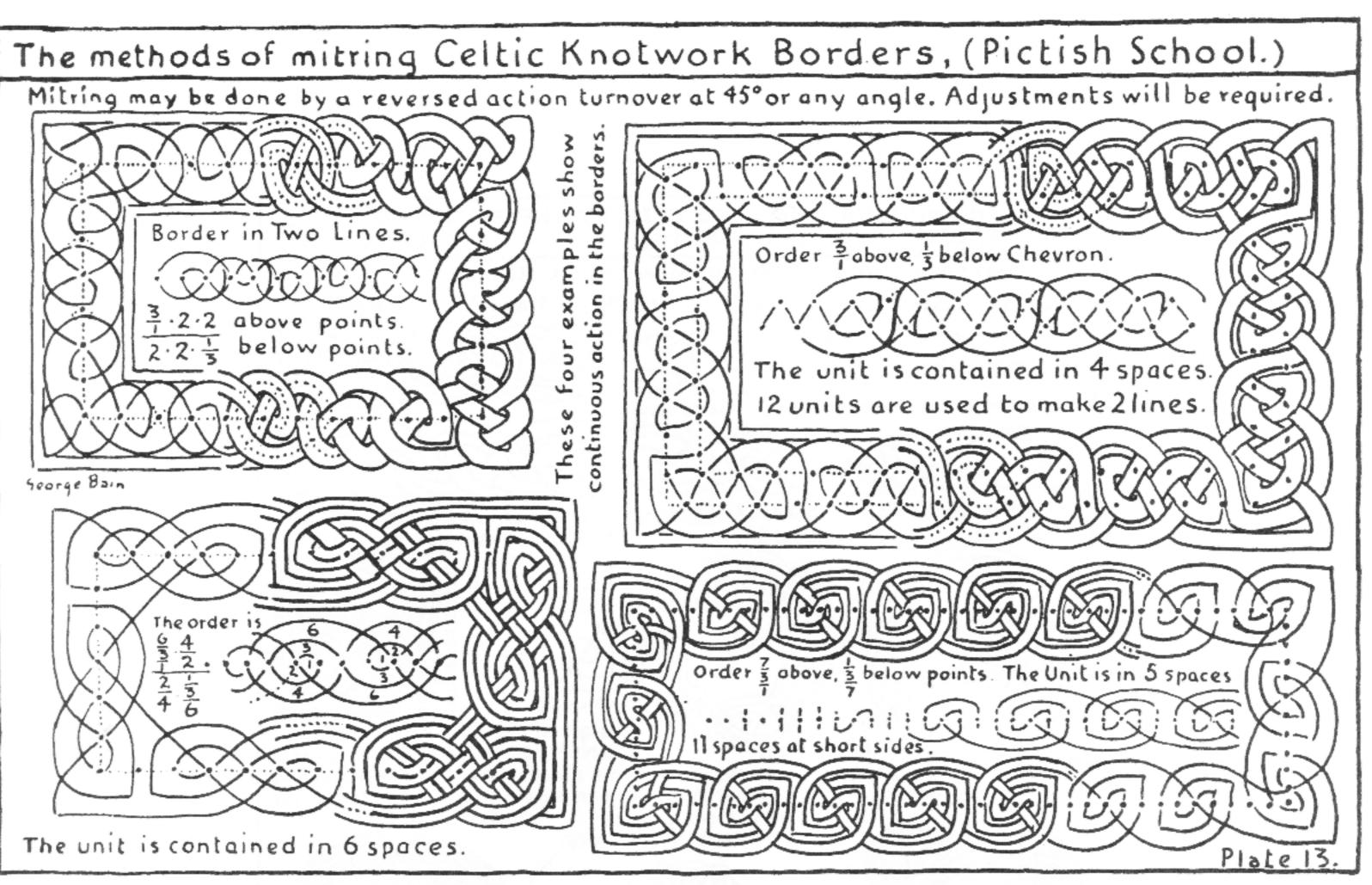


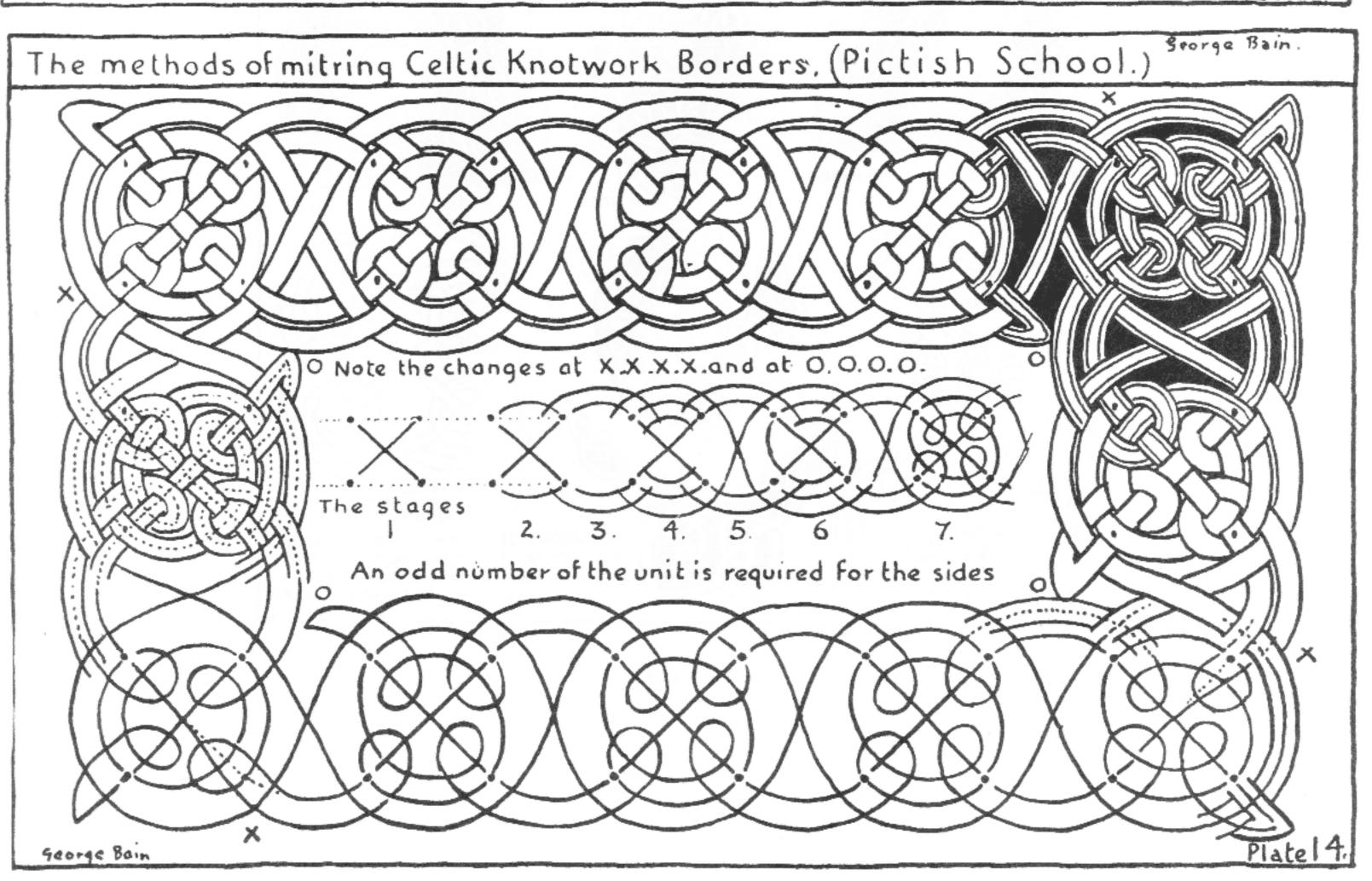












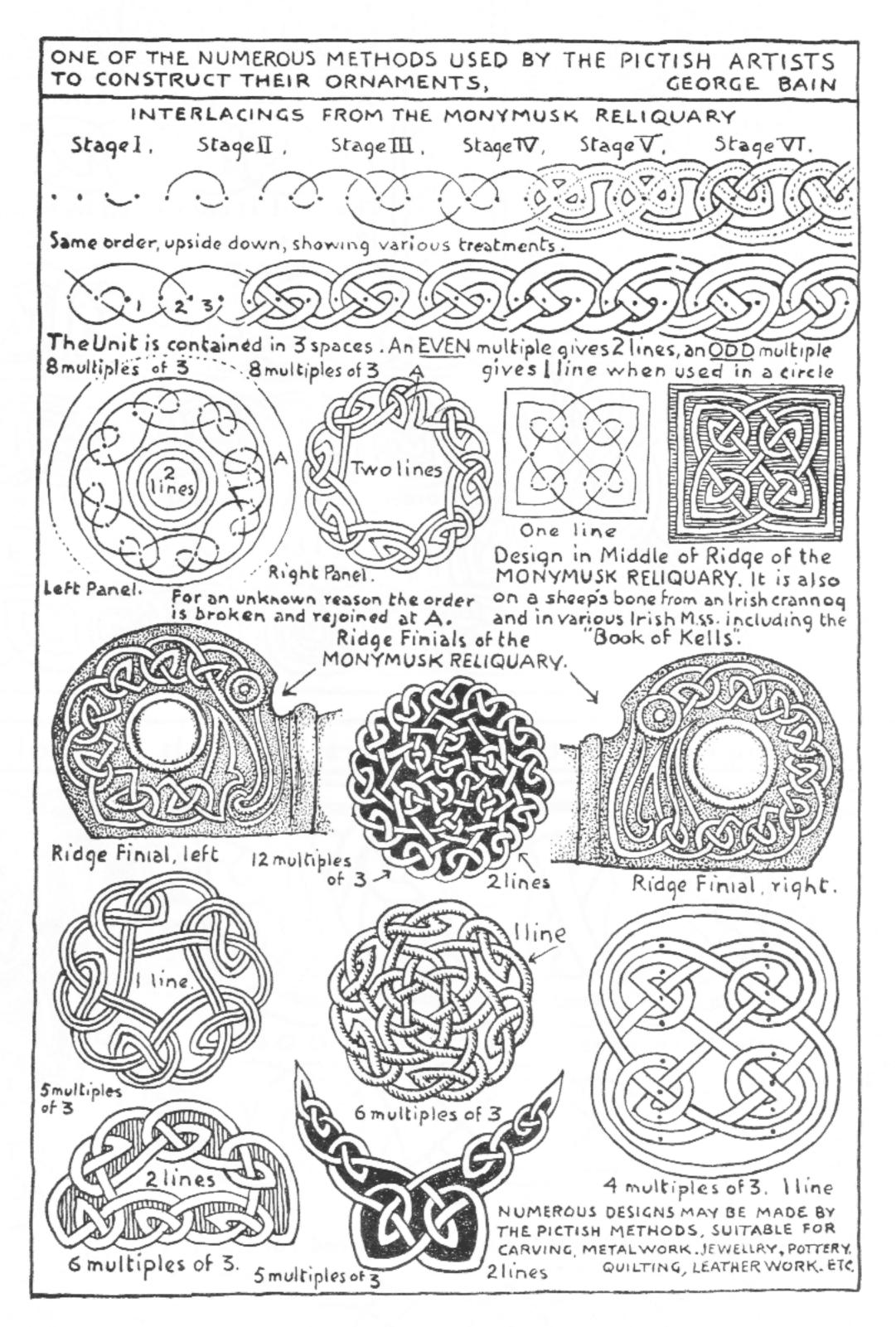


Plate C

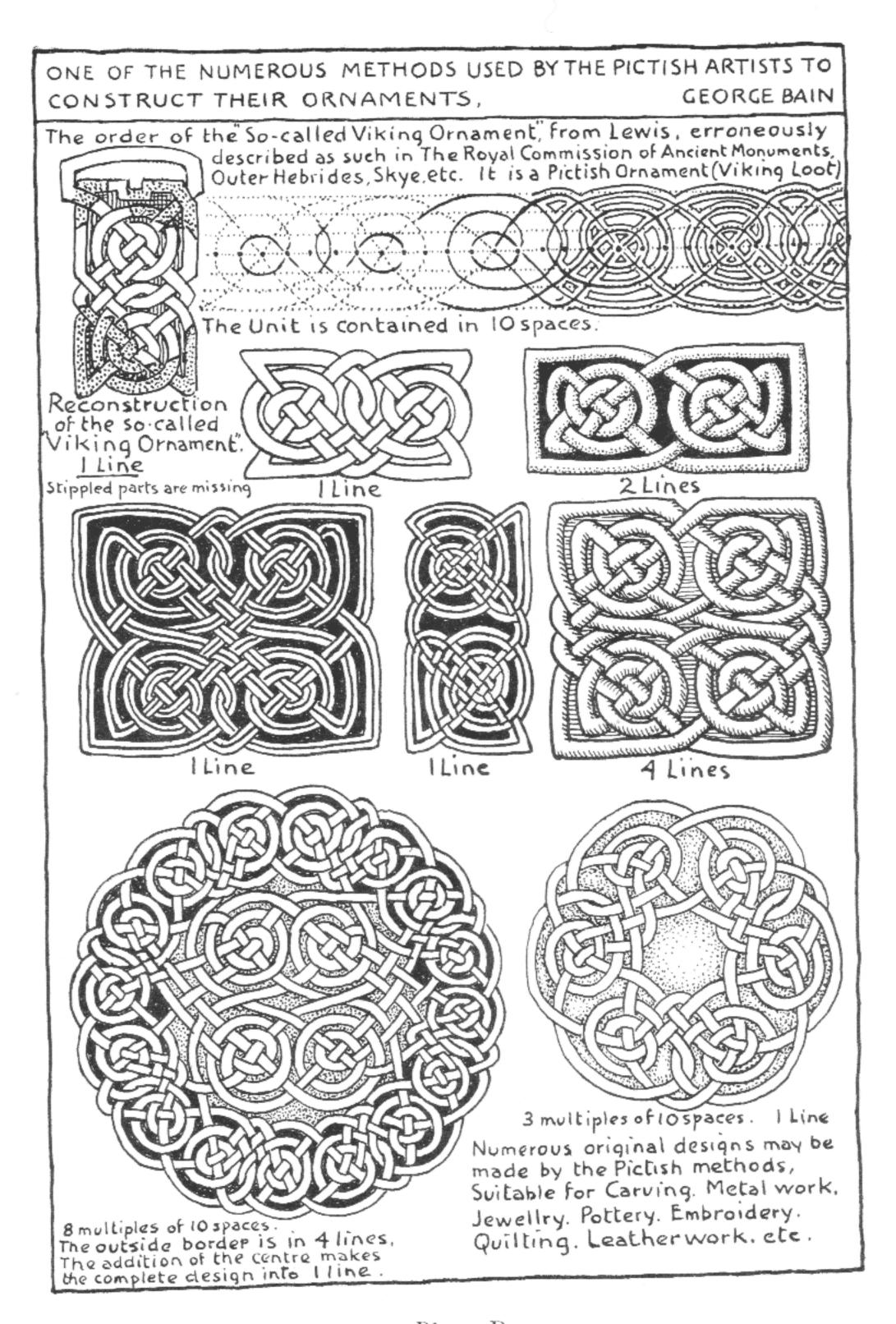
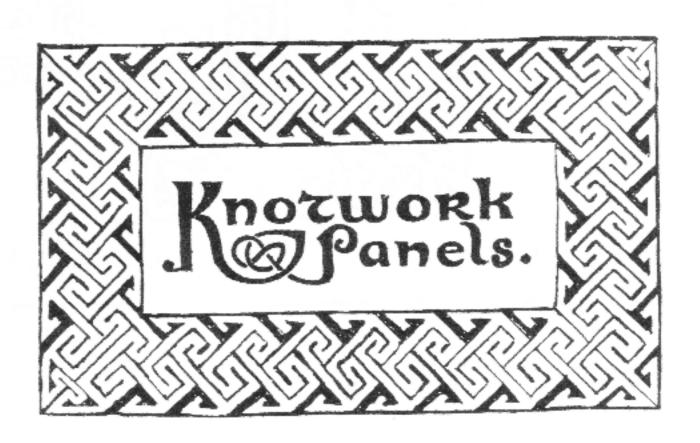


Plate D



.



.

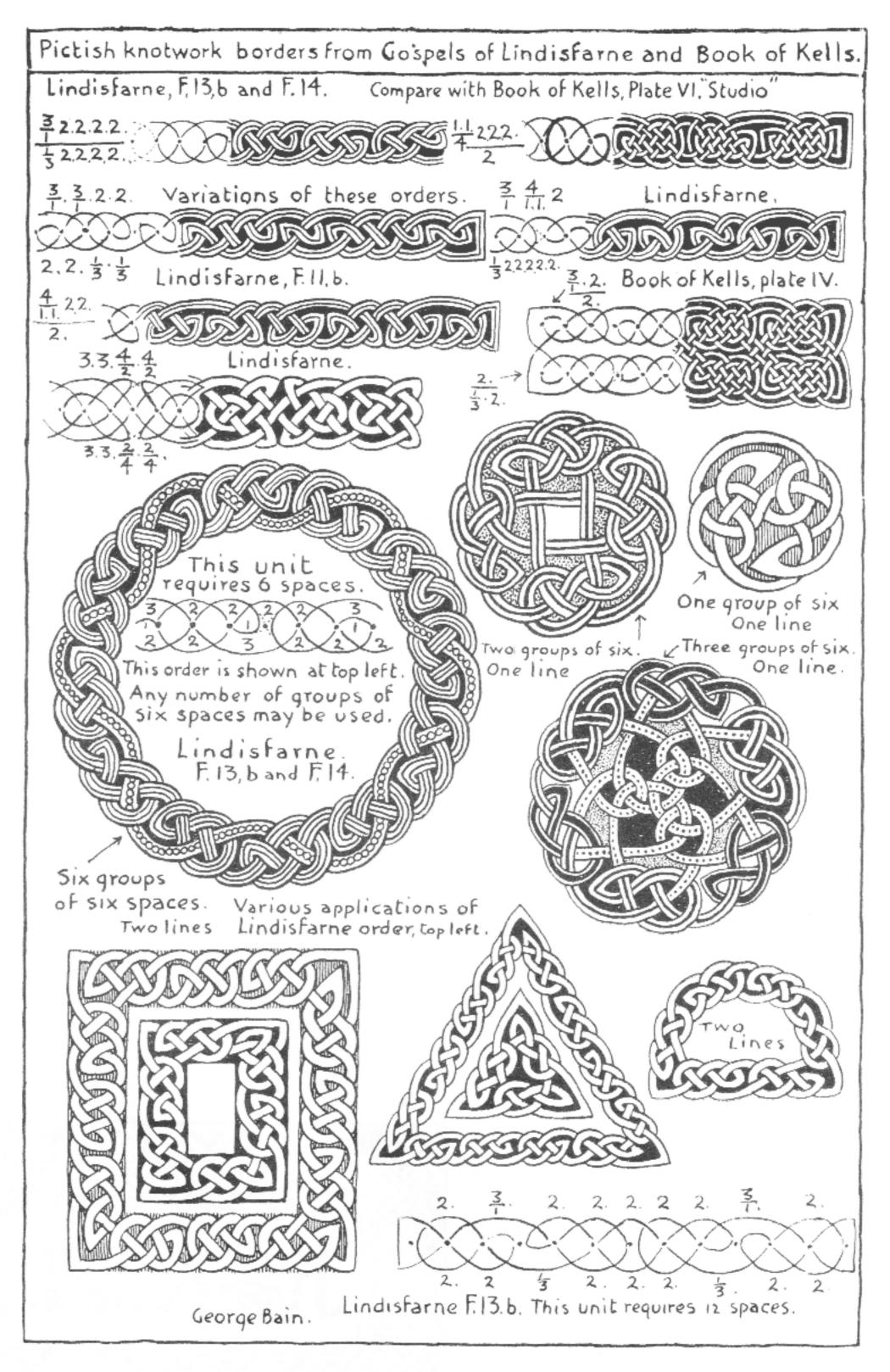


Plate E

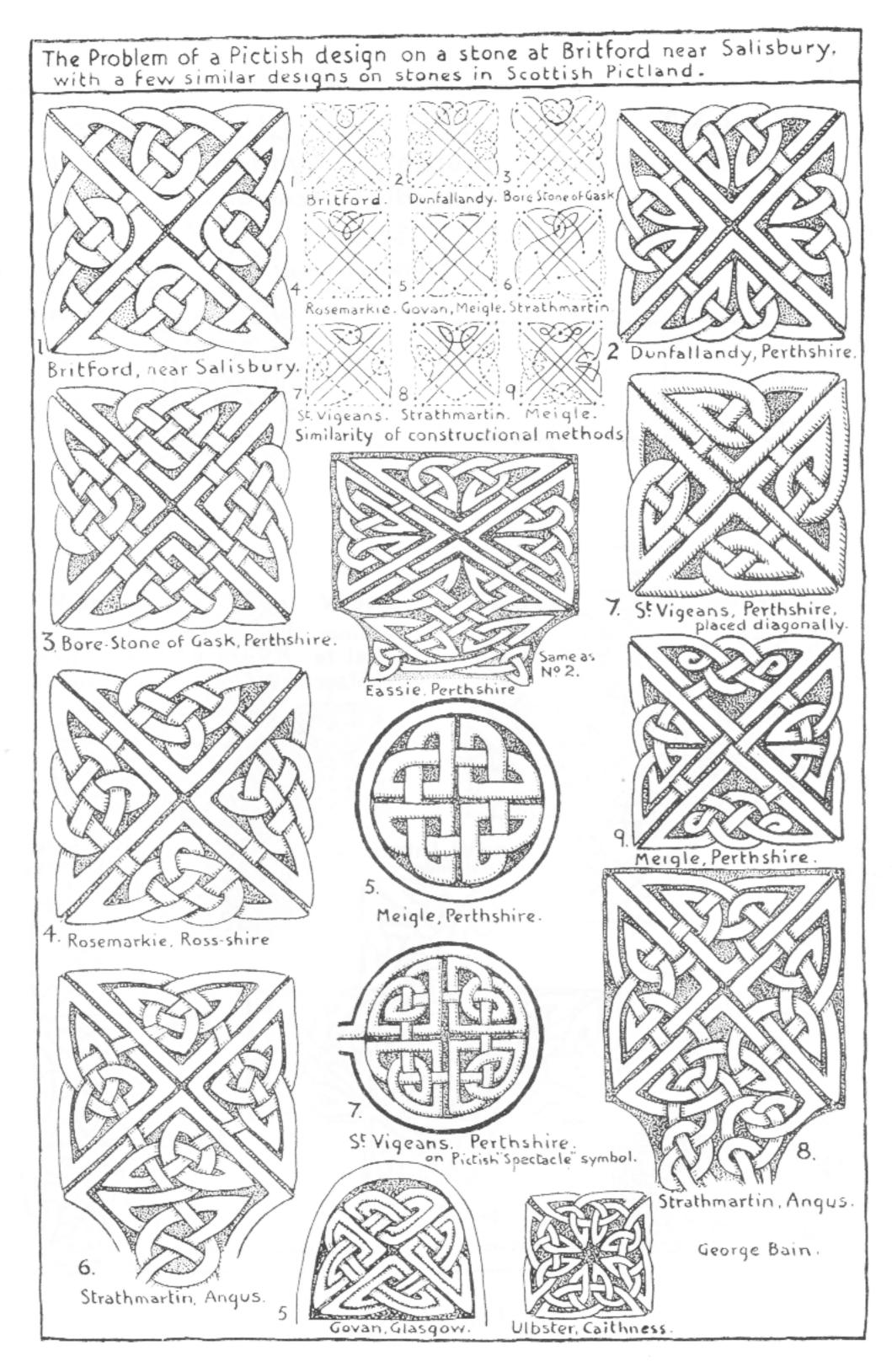


Plate F

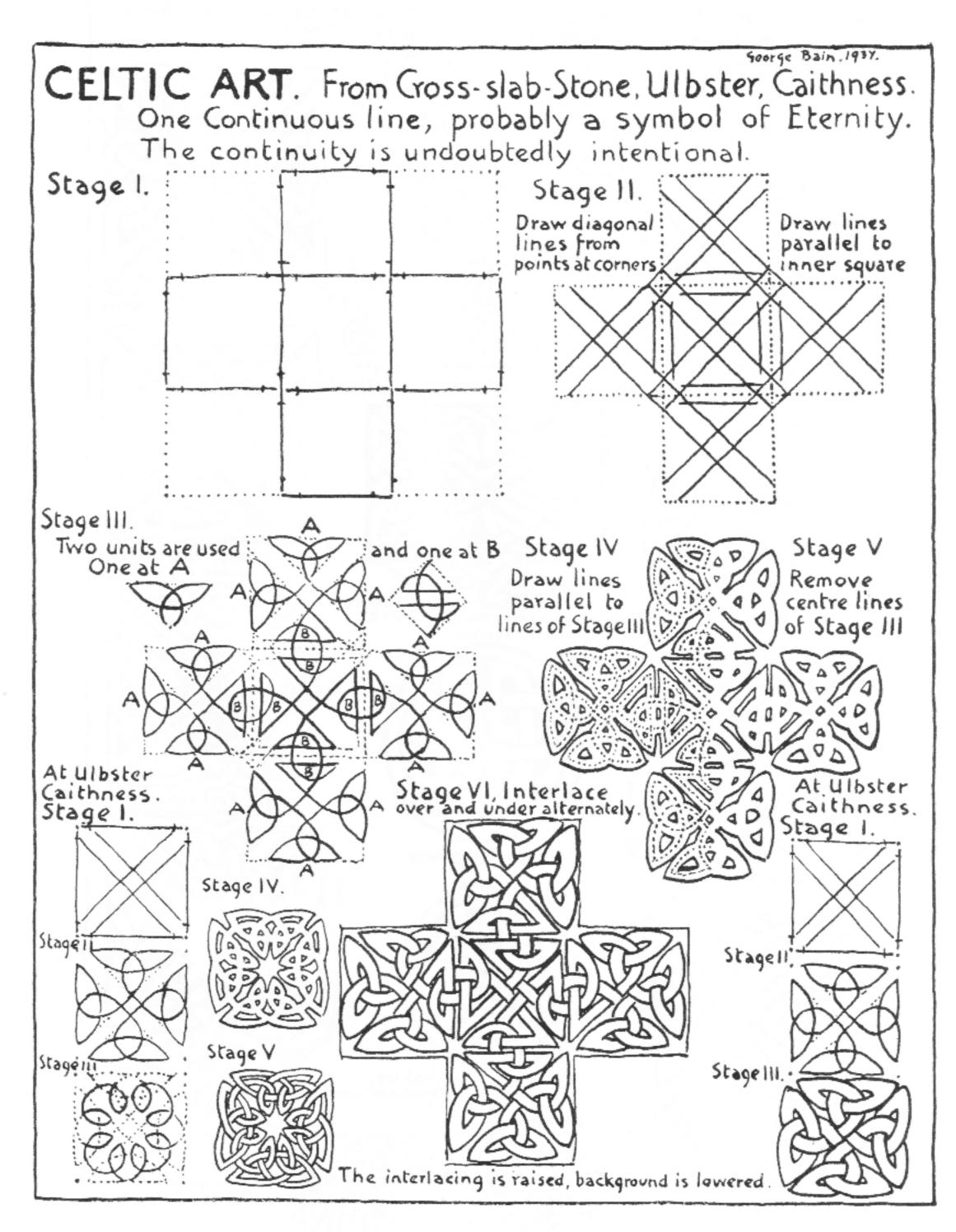


Plate G

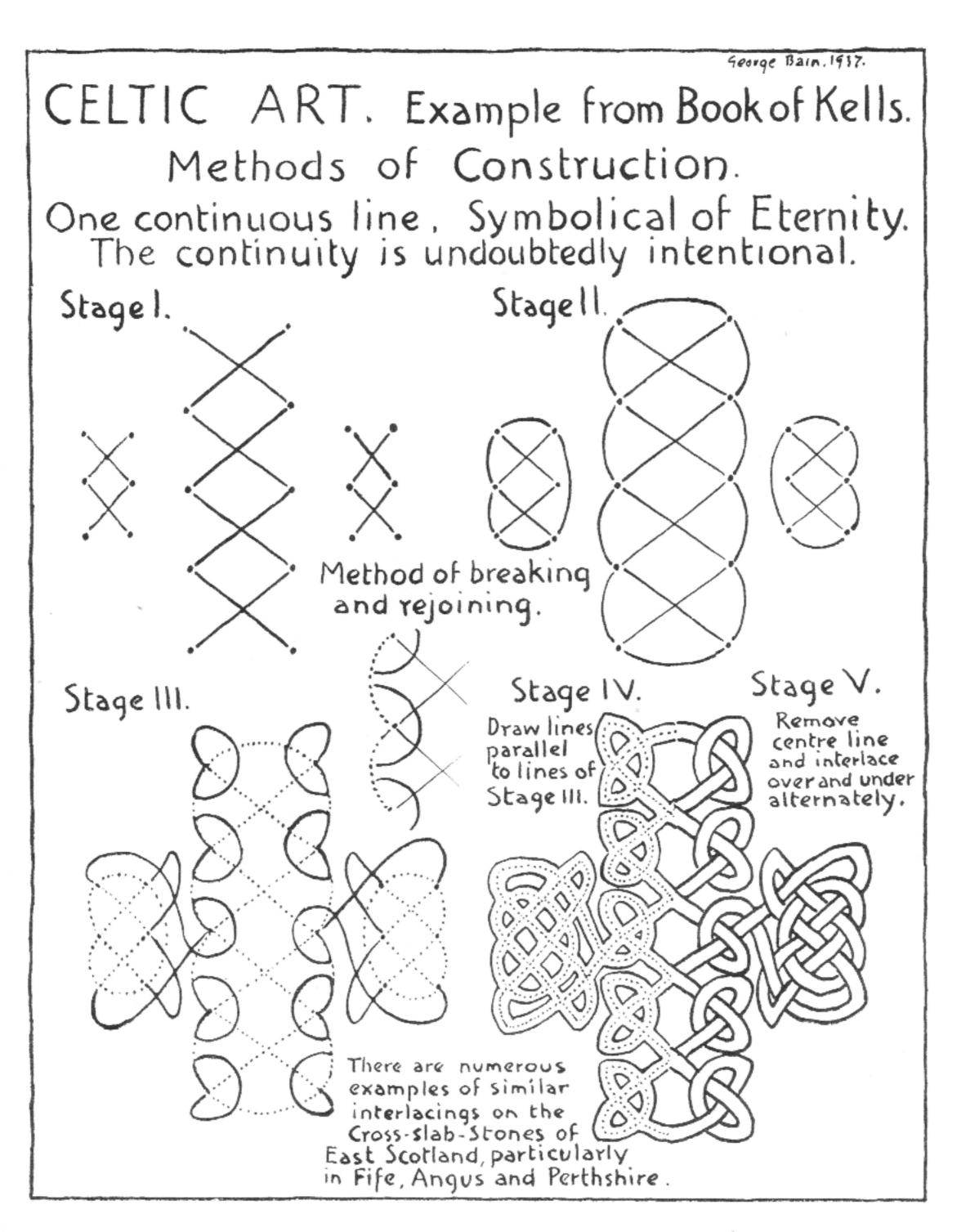
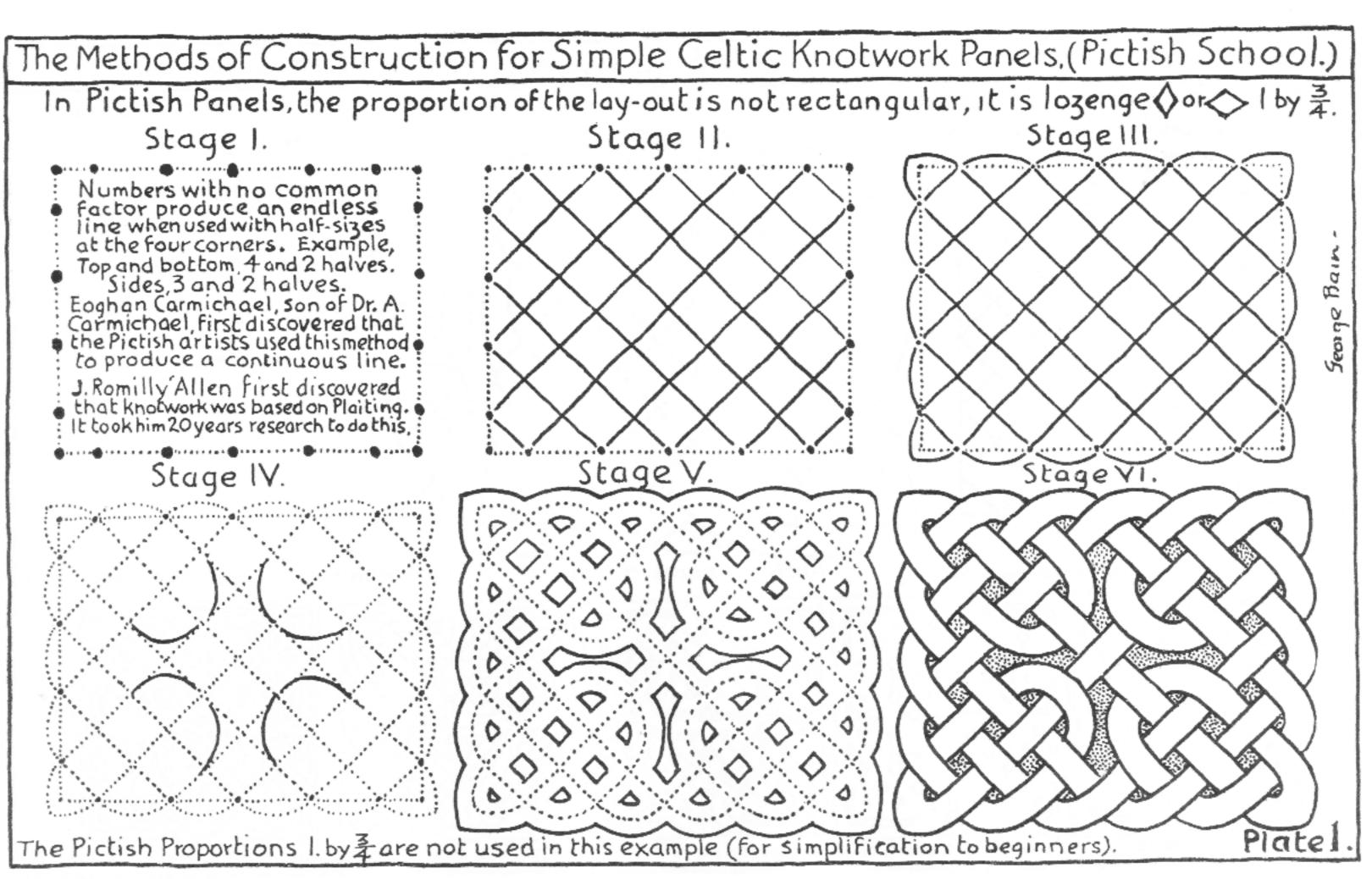
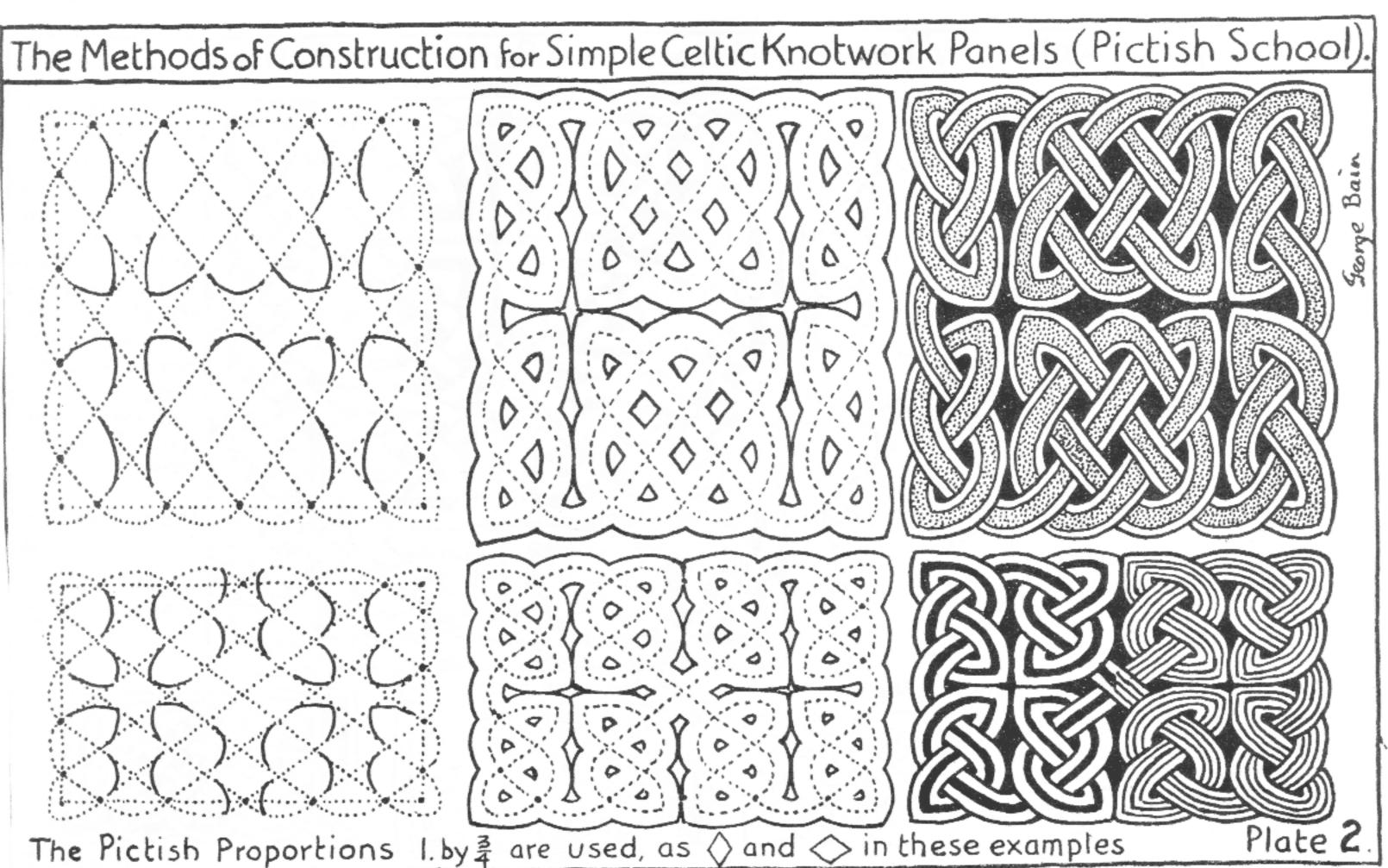
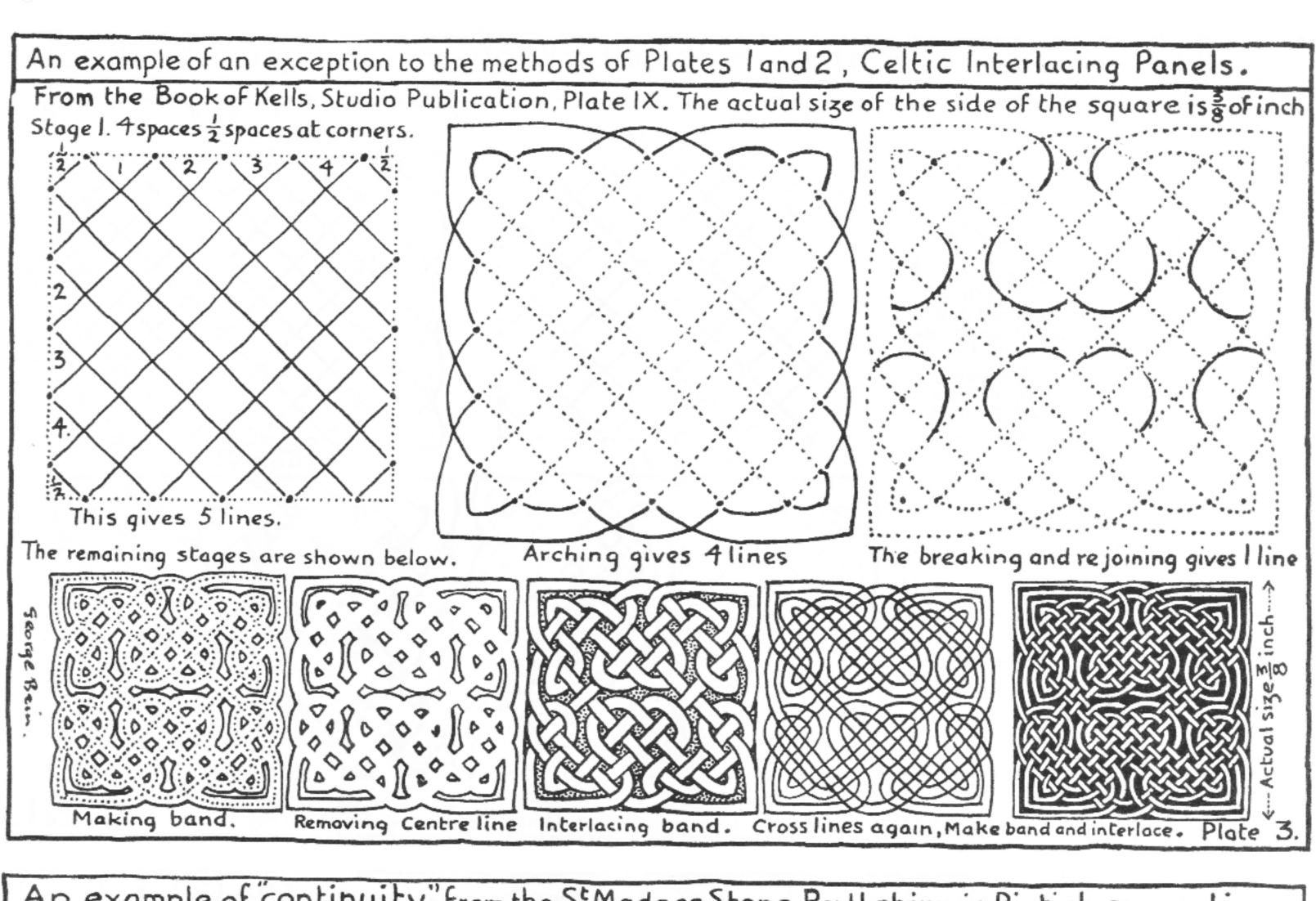


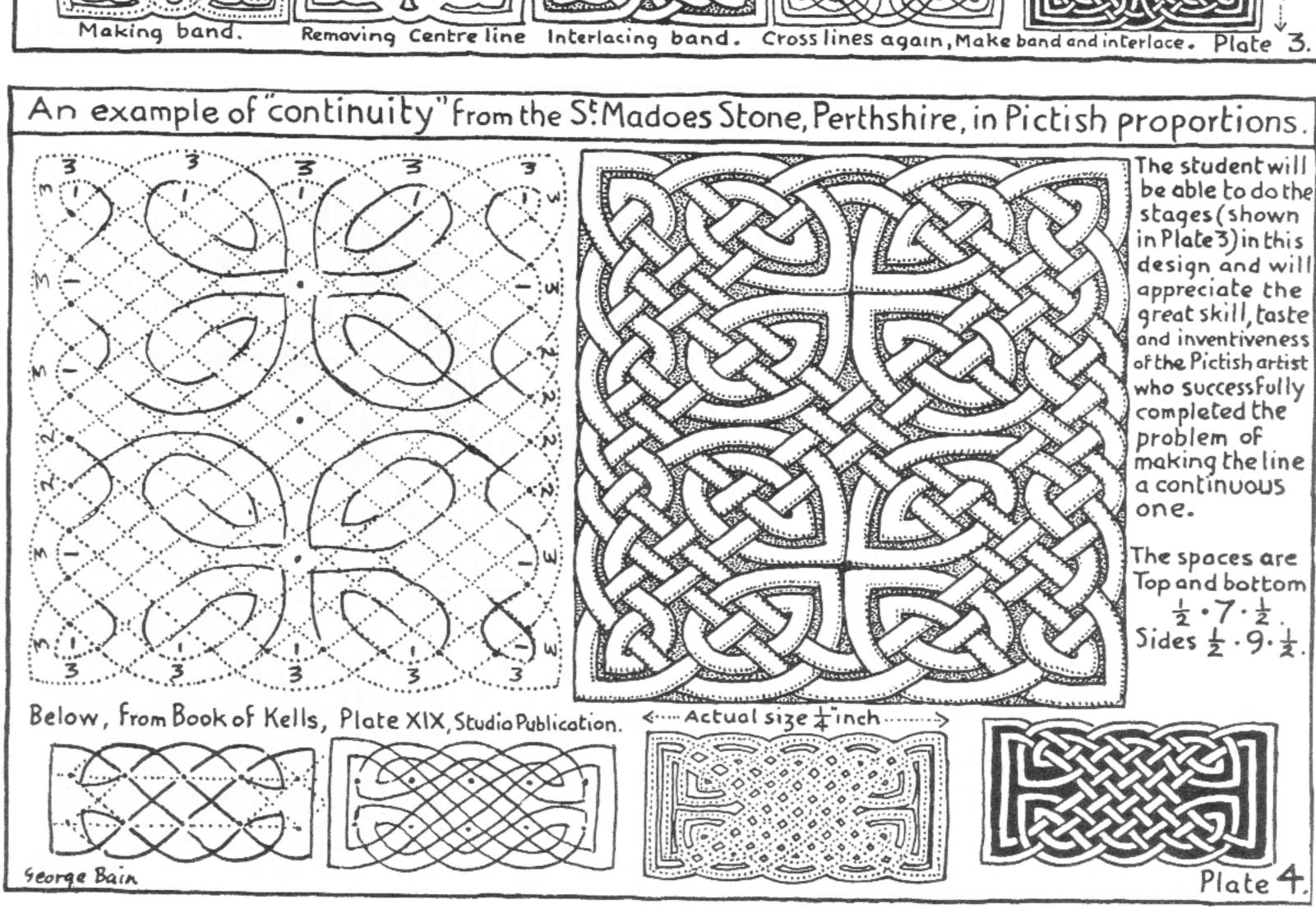
Plate H

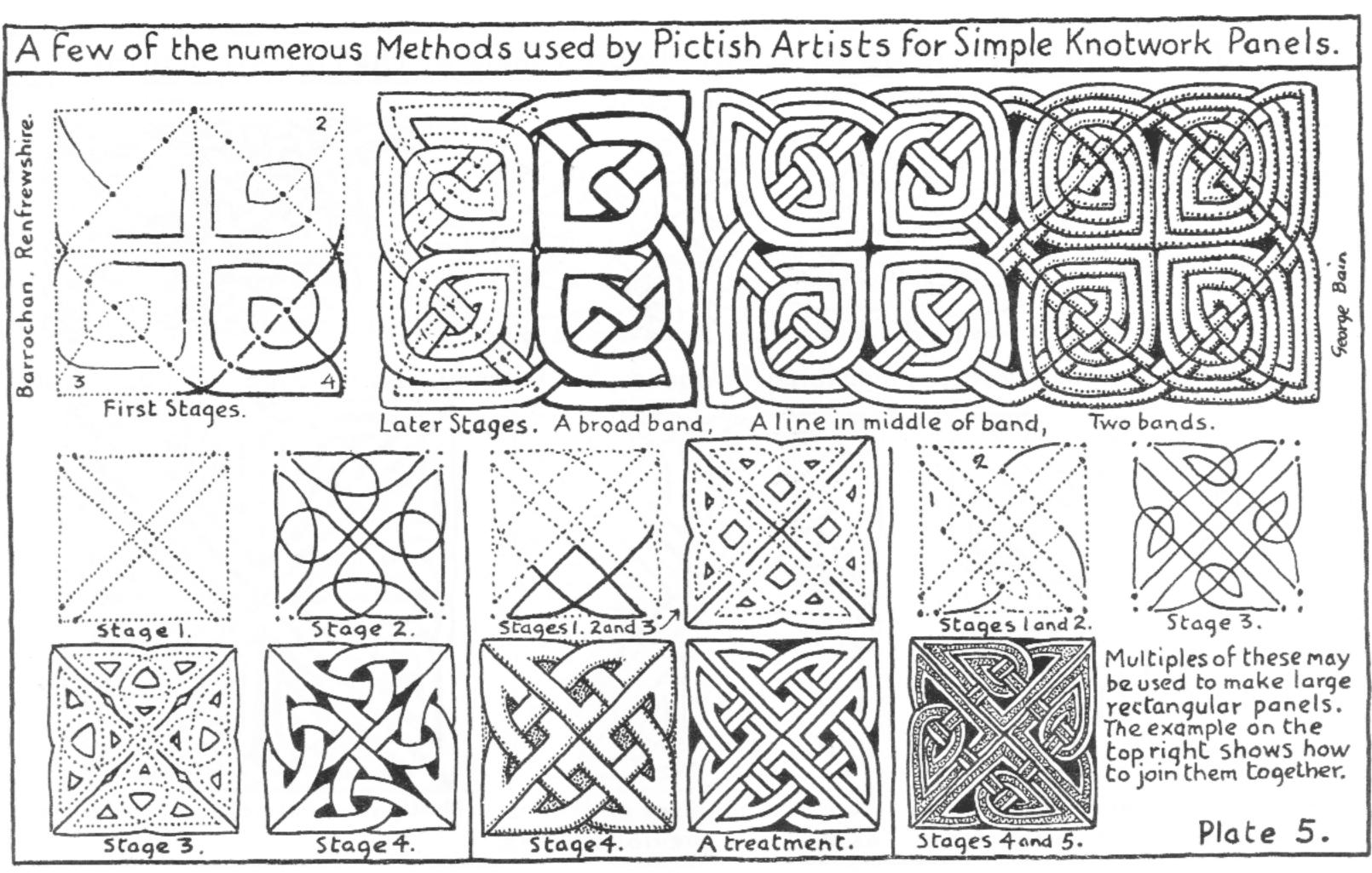
		•>			

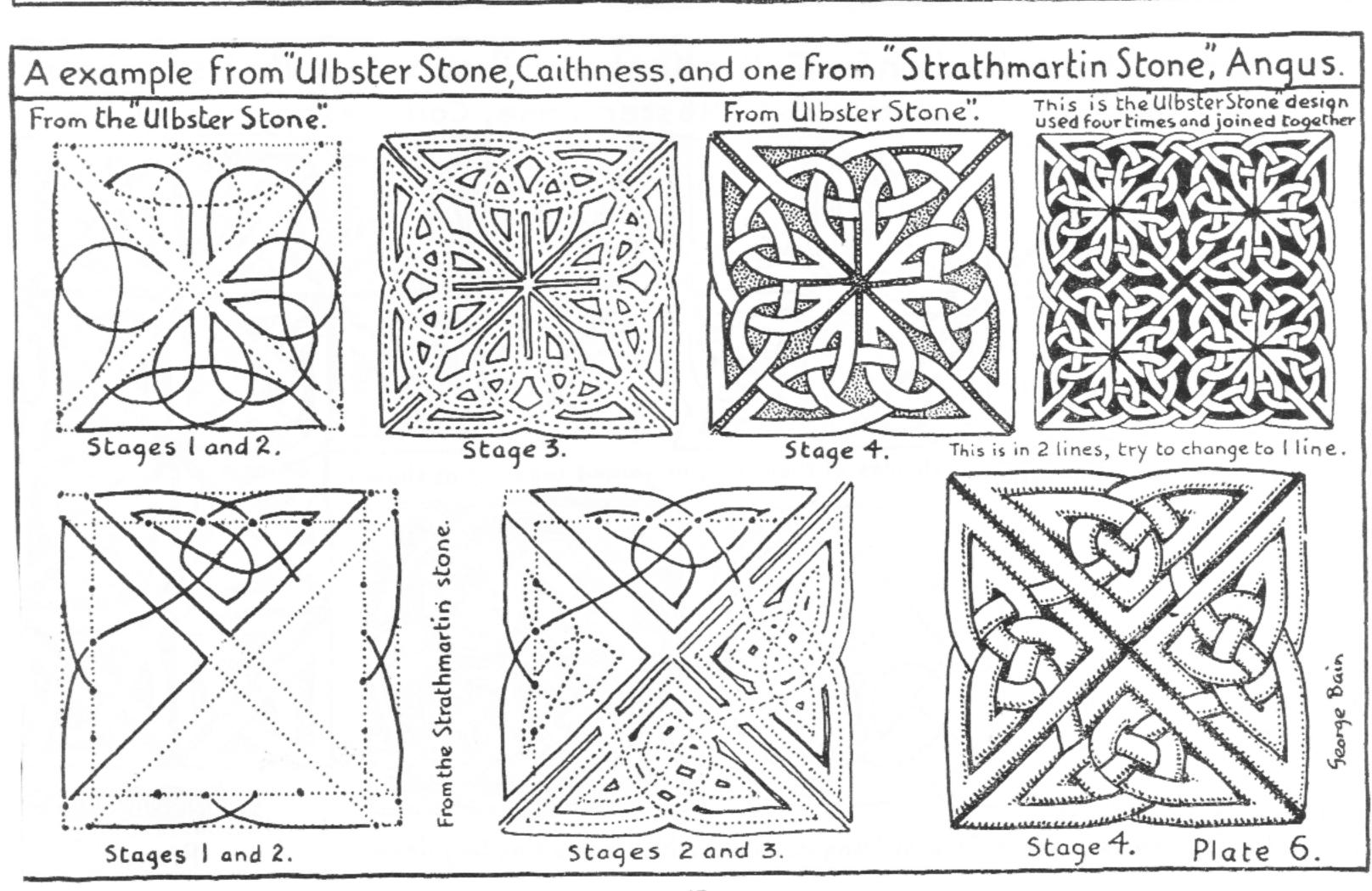








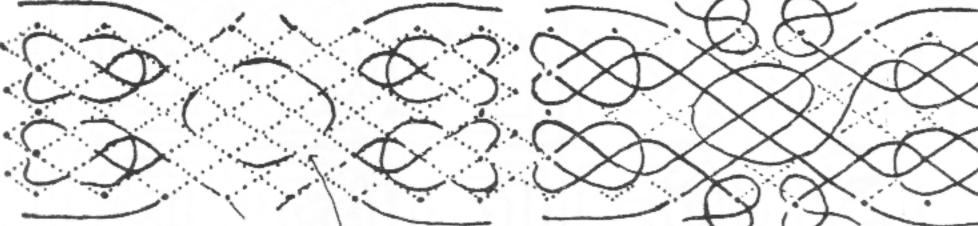


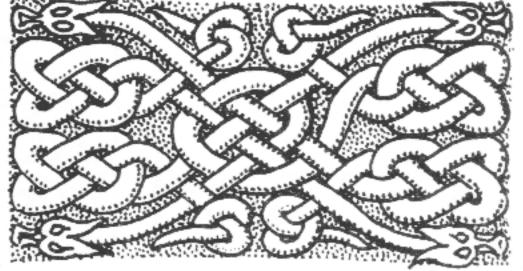


## The Methods of Construction for Celtic Knotwork Panels of the Pictish School.

Reptile knotwork panel from the Shandwick Stone".

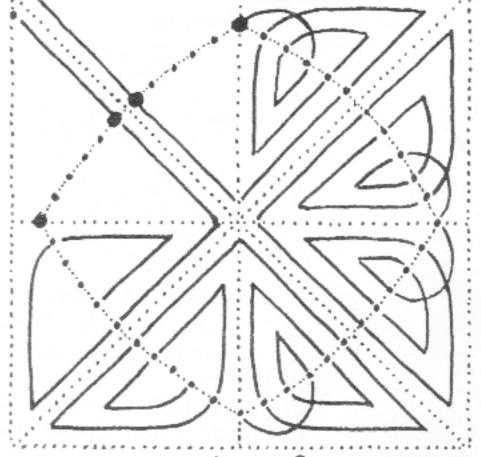
George Bain.



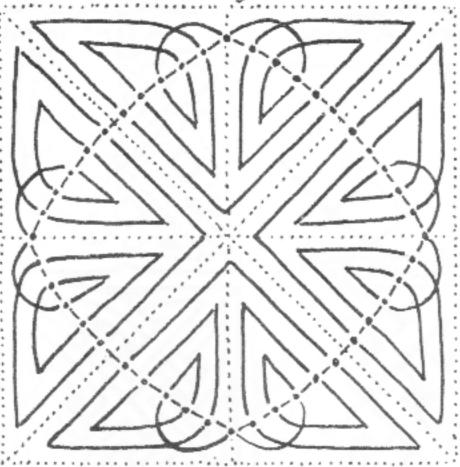


Note how the centre ring was joined into the design by making it a spiral.

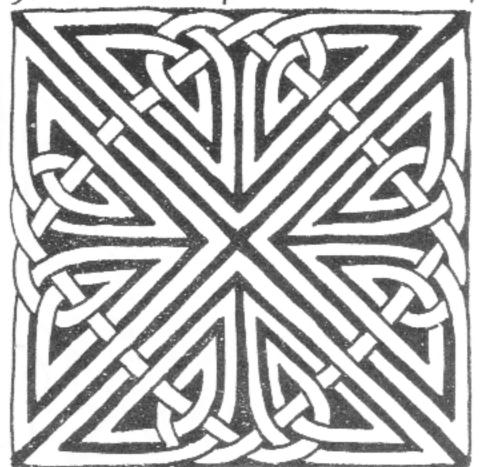
Divide curved line into Ilspaces. Lindisfarne, St. Vigeans, Dunfallandy, Eassie, Gospels of M. Durnan, etc.



On the curved lines, first mark the large points, then the smaller ones.



continue in order of stages as shown in previous plates.

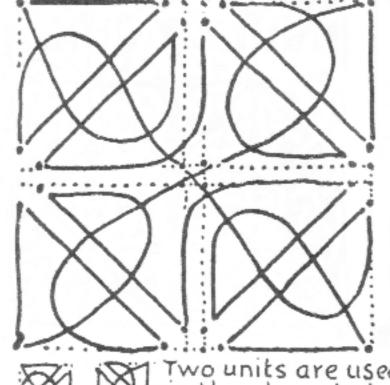


Multiples of this may be used for a panel. Plate 7.



Book of Lindisfarne and Ulbster Stone, Caithness.

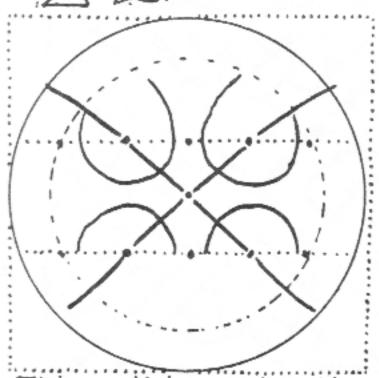
George Bain



Two units are used in the above design



Multiples of them may be joined together as shown.







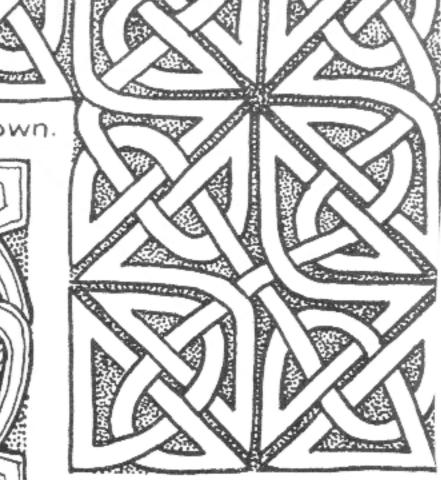
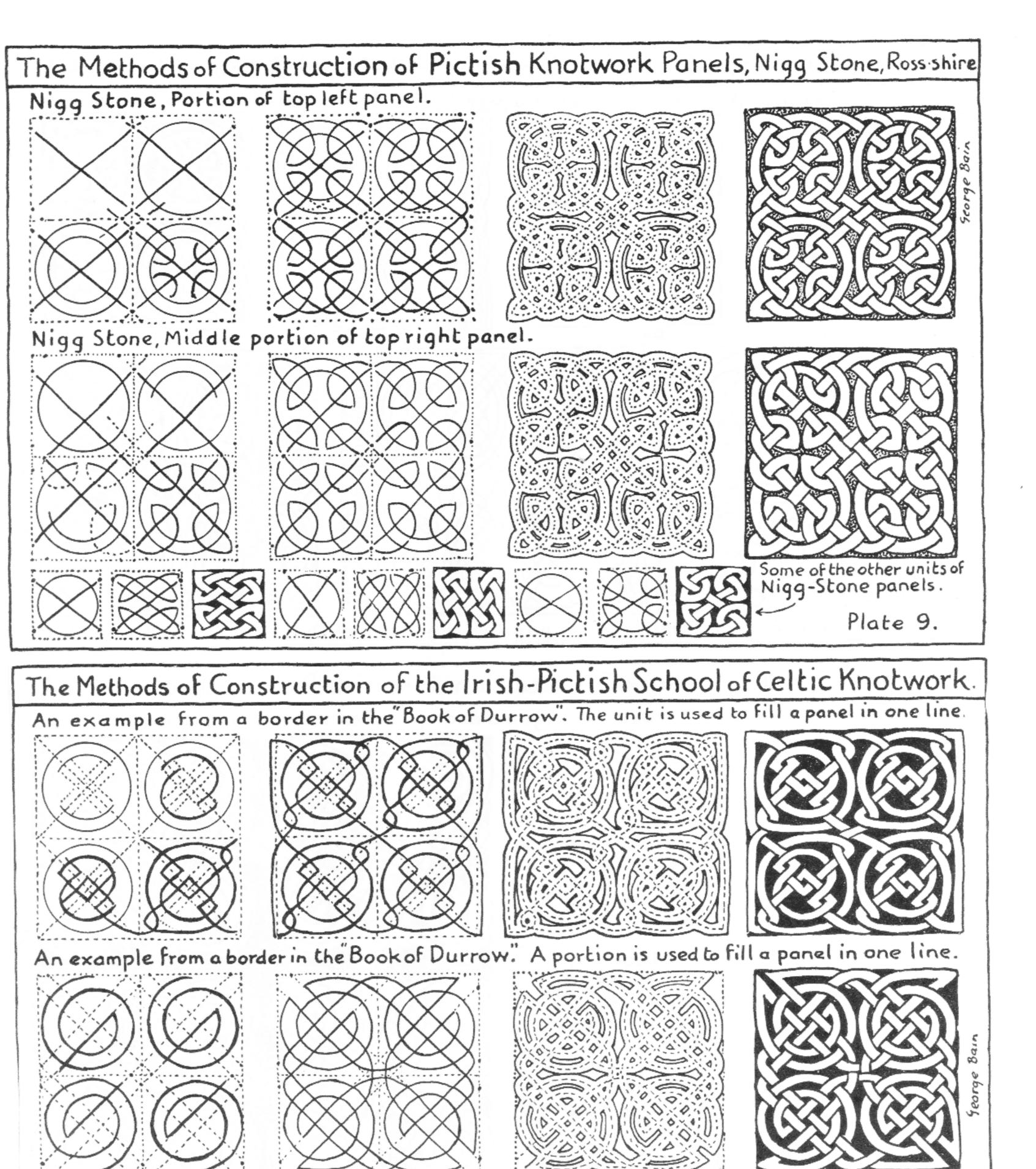


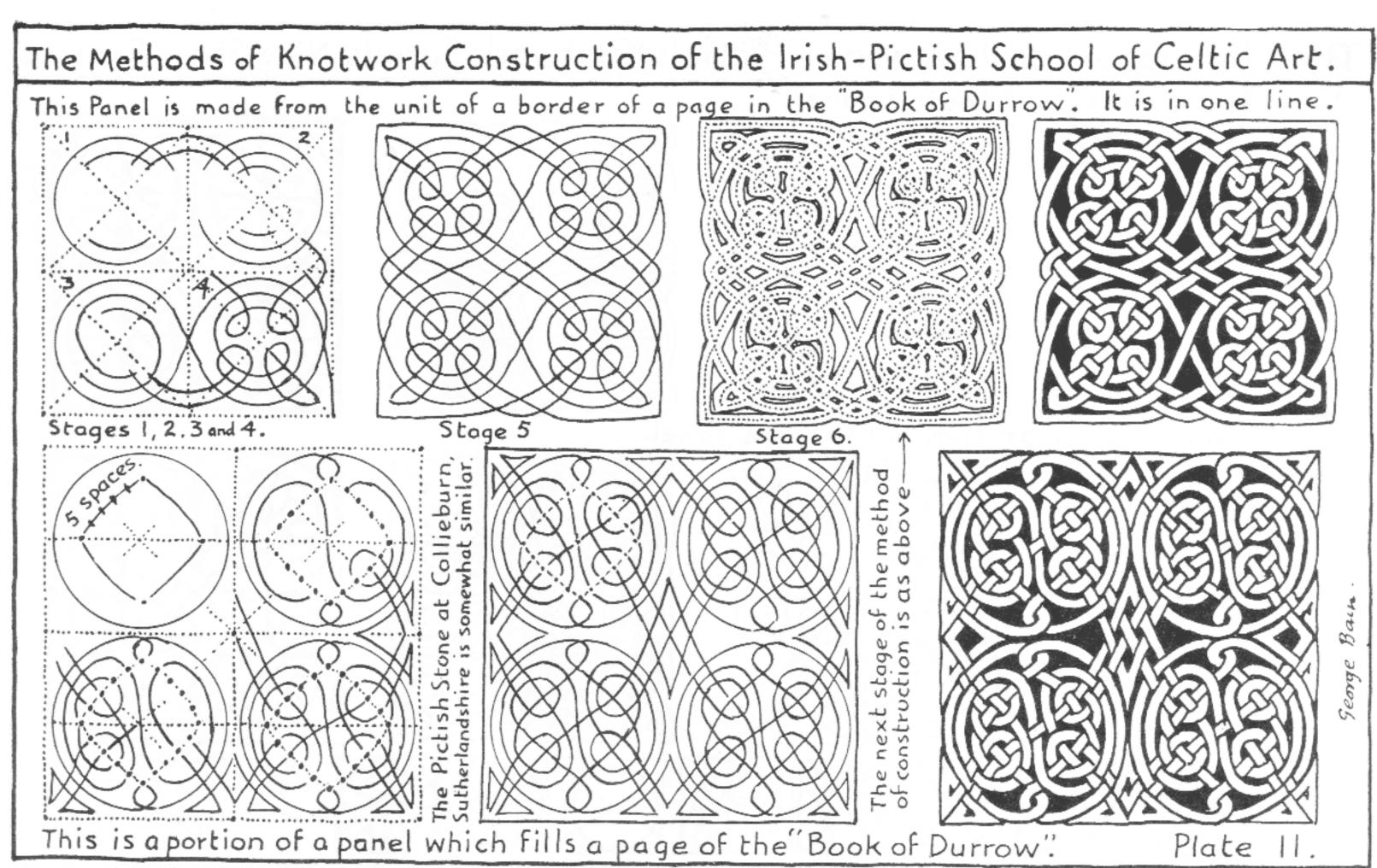
Plate 8.

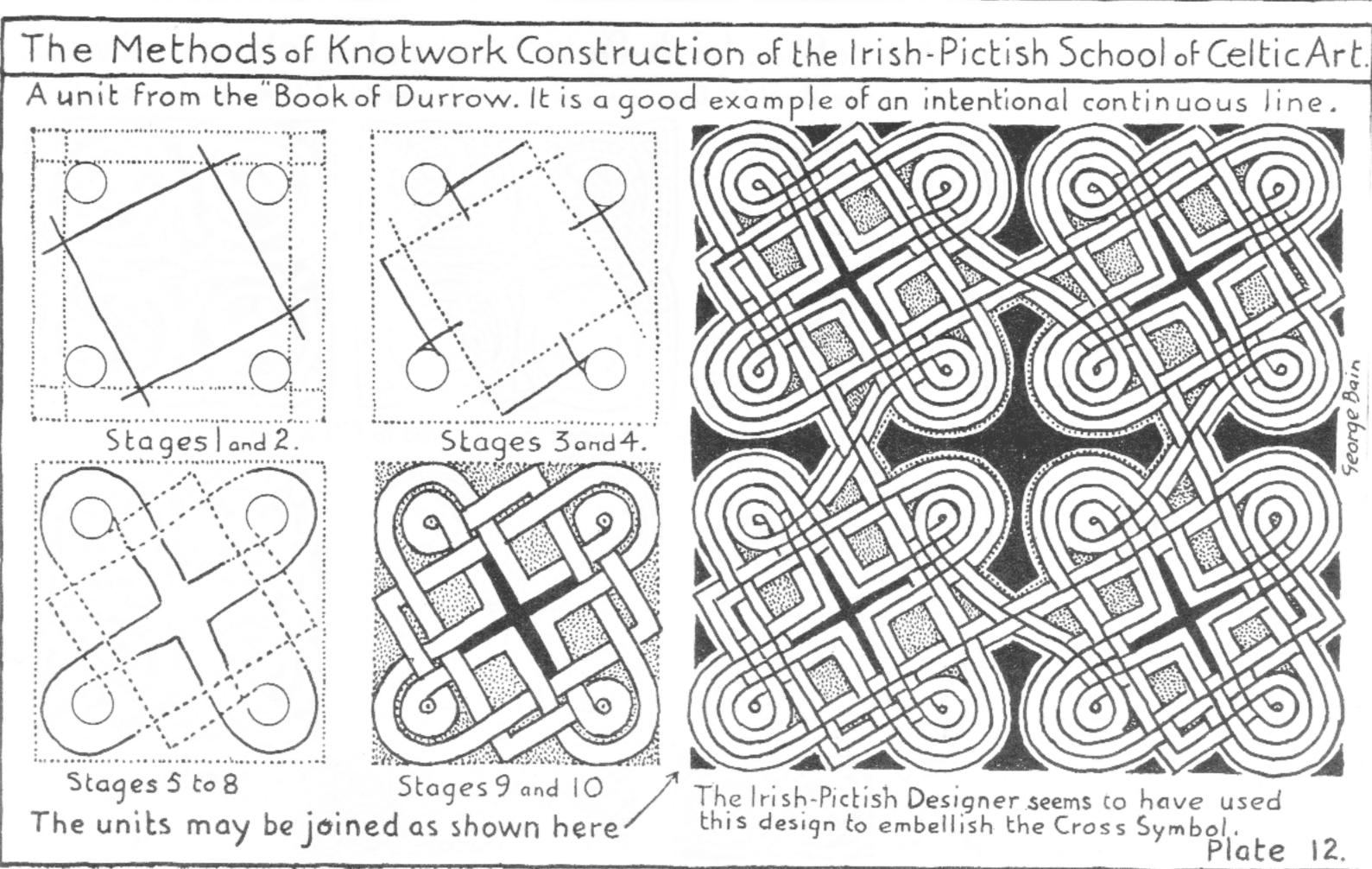


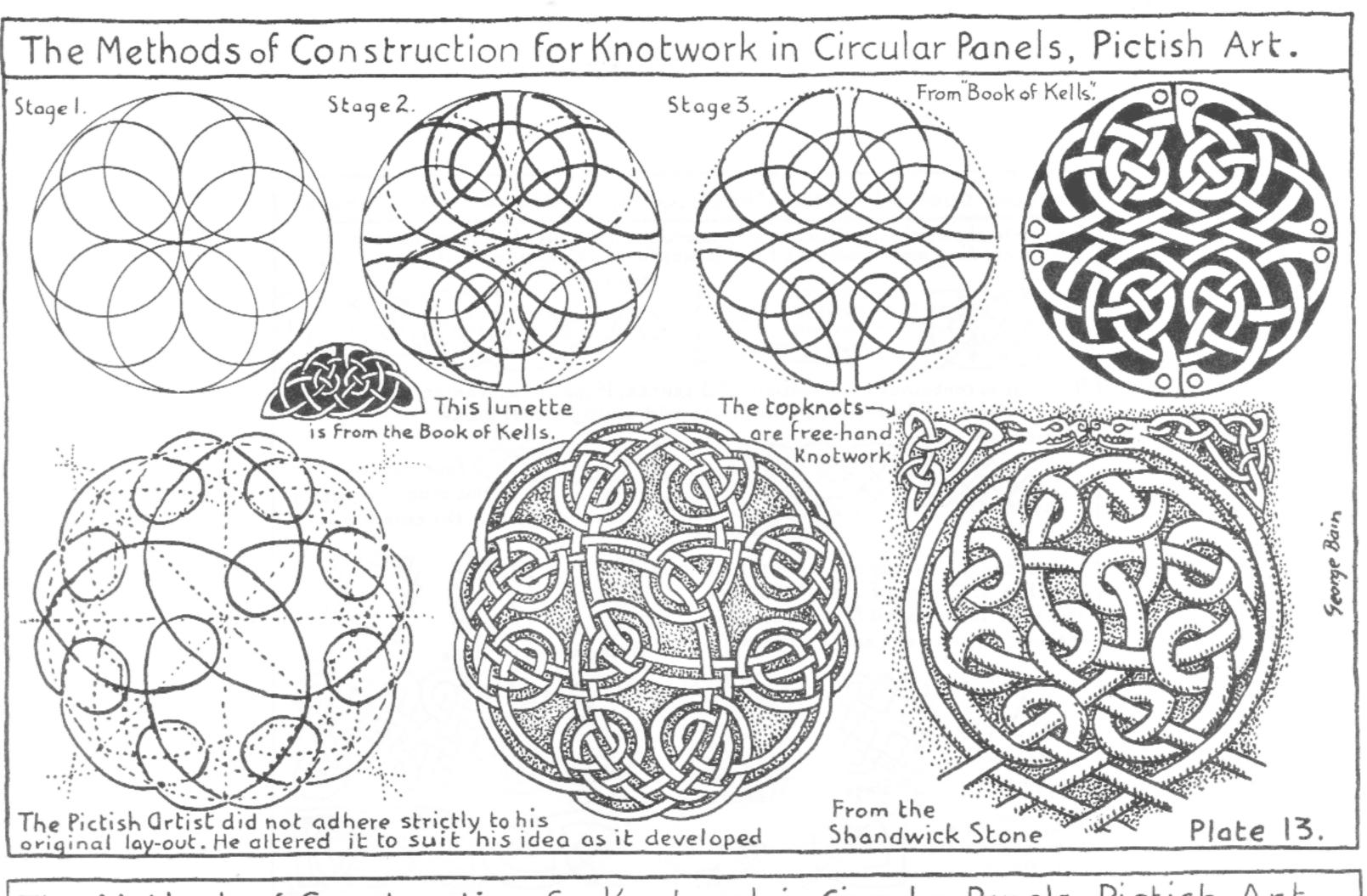


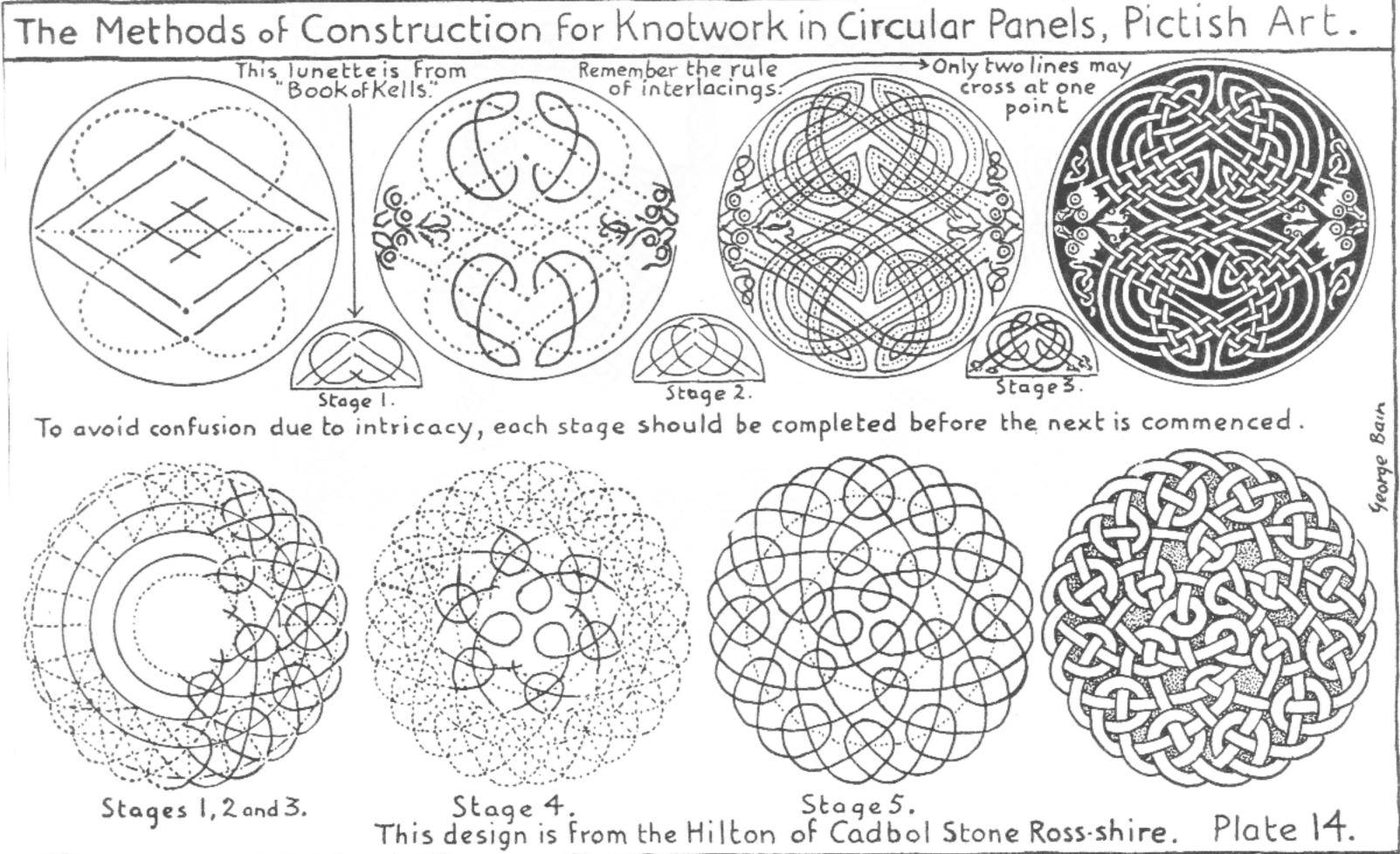
The stages of the two units as borders are shown on left bottom.

Plate 10.









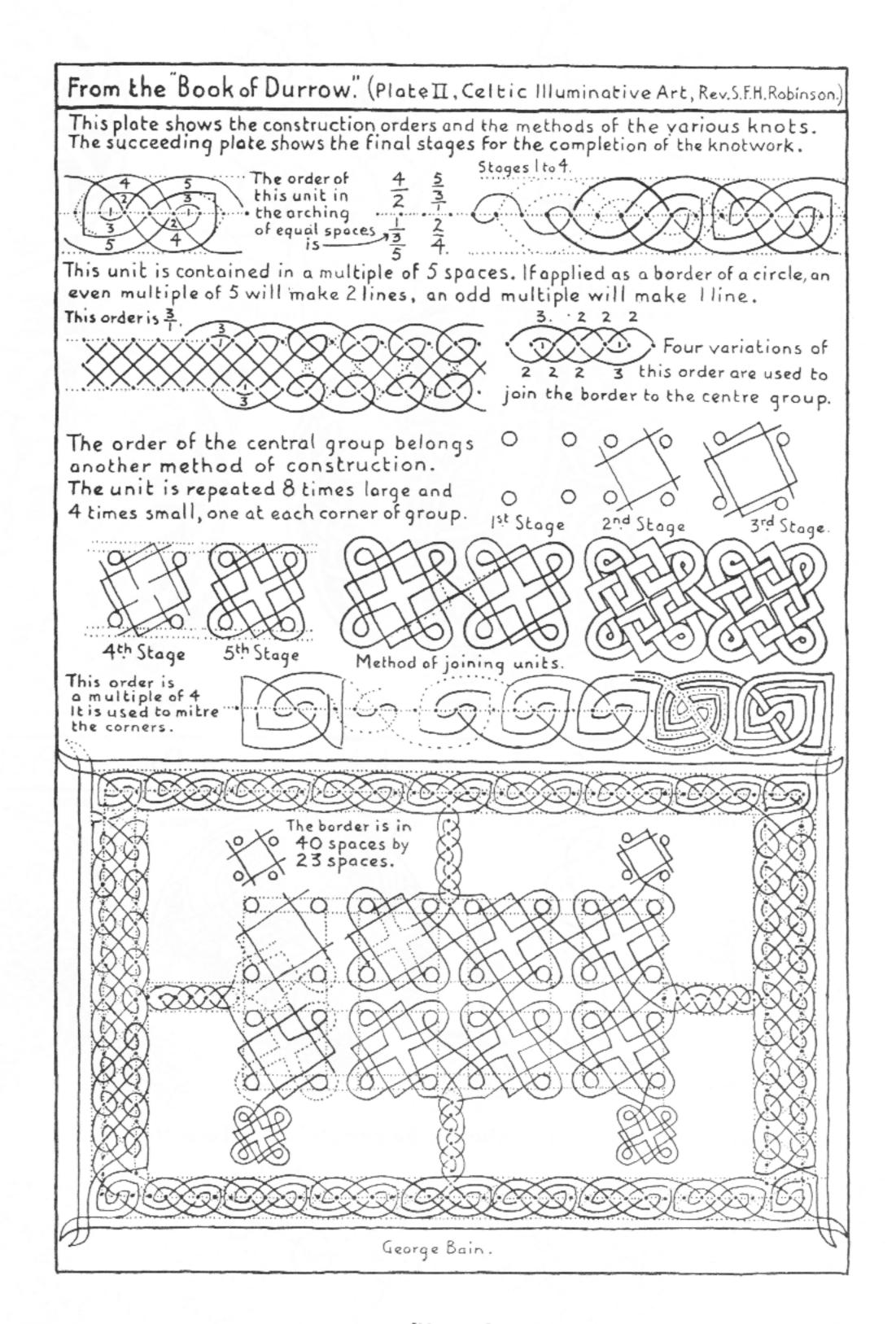
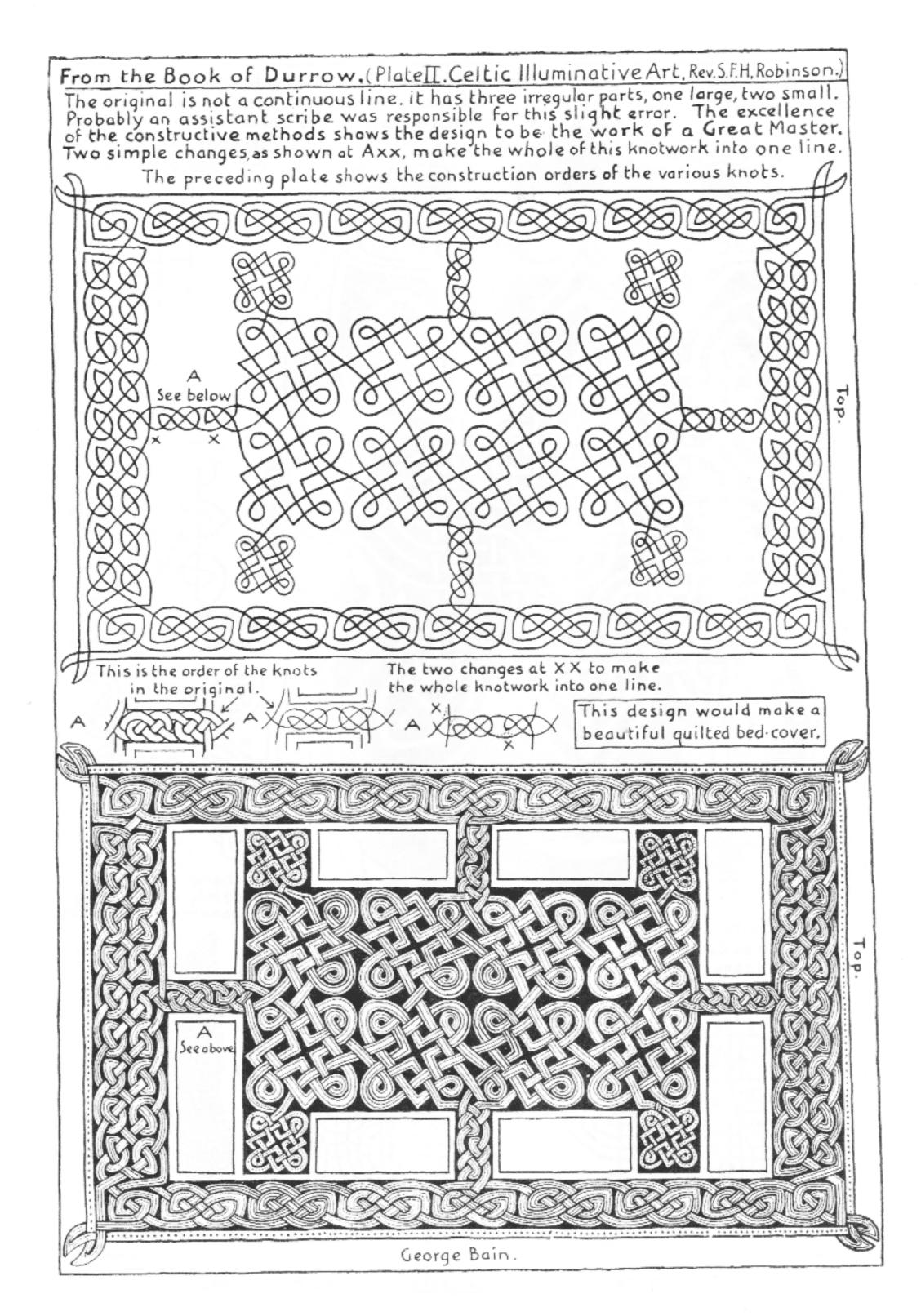
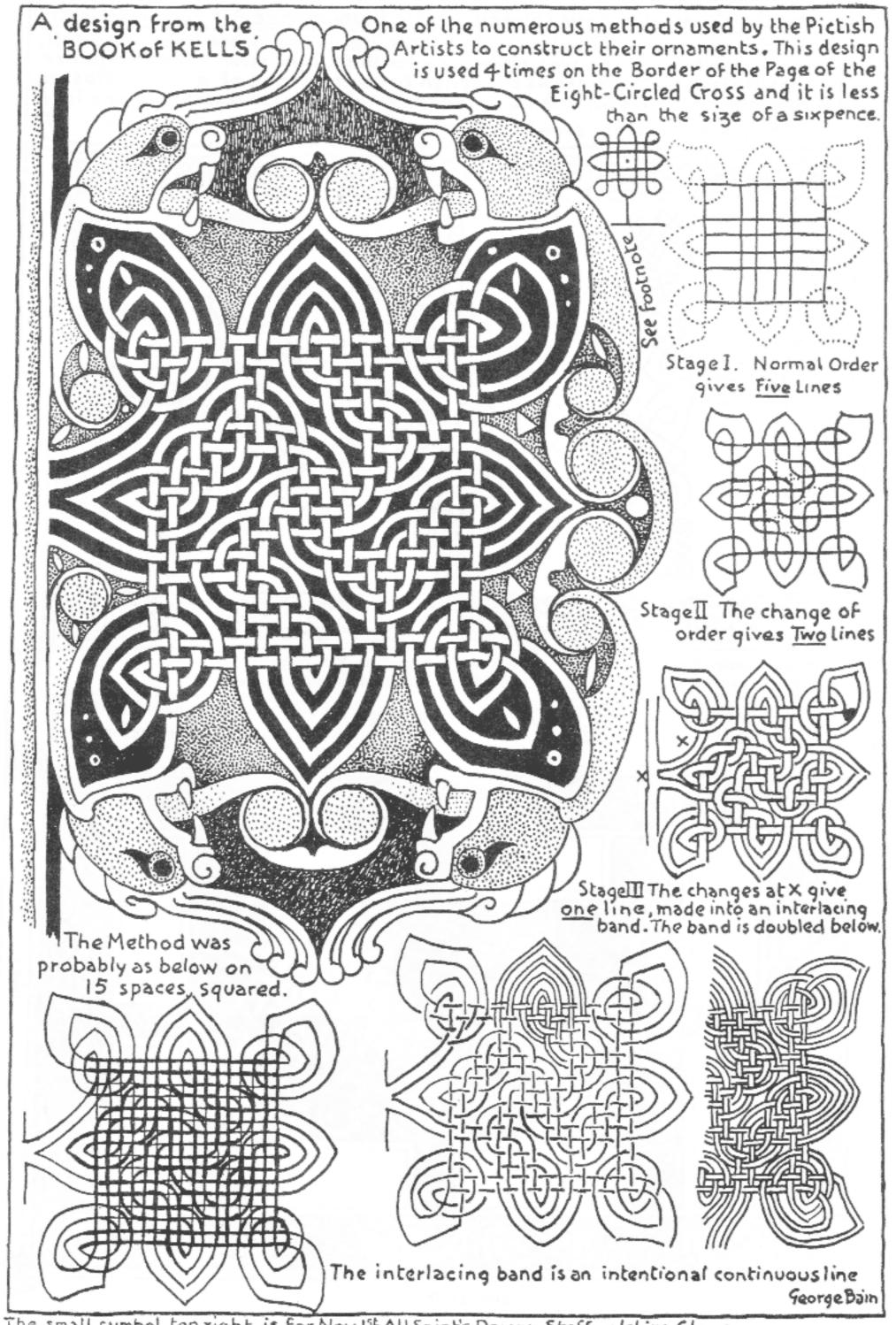


Plate I



 $Plate\ J$ 



The small symbol, top right, is for Nov. 1st All Saint's Dayon Staffordshire Clogg.

Plate K

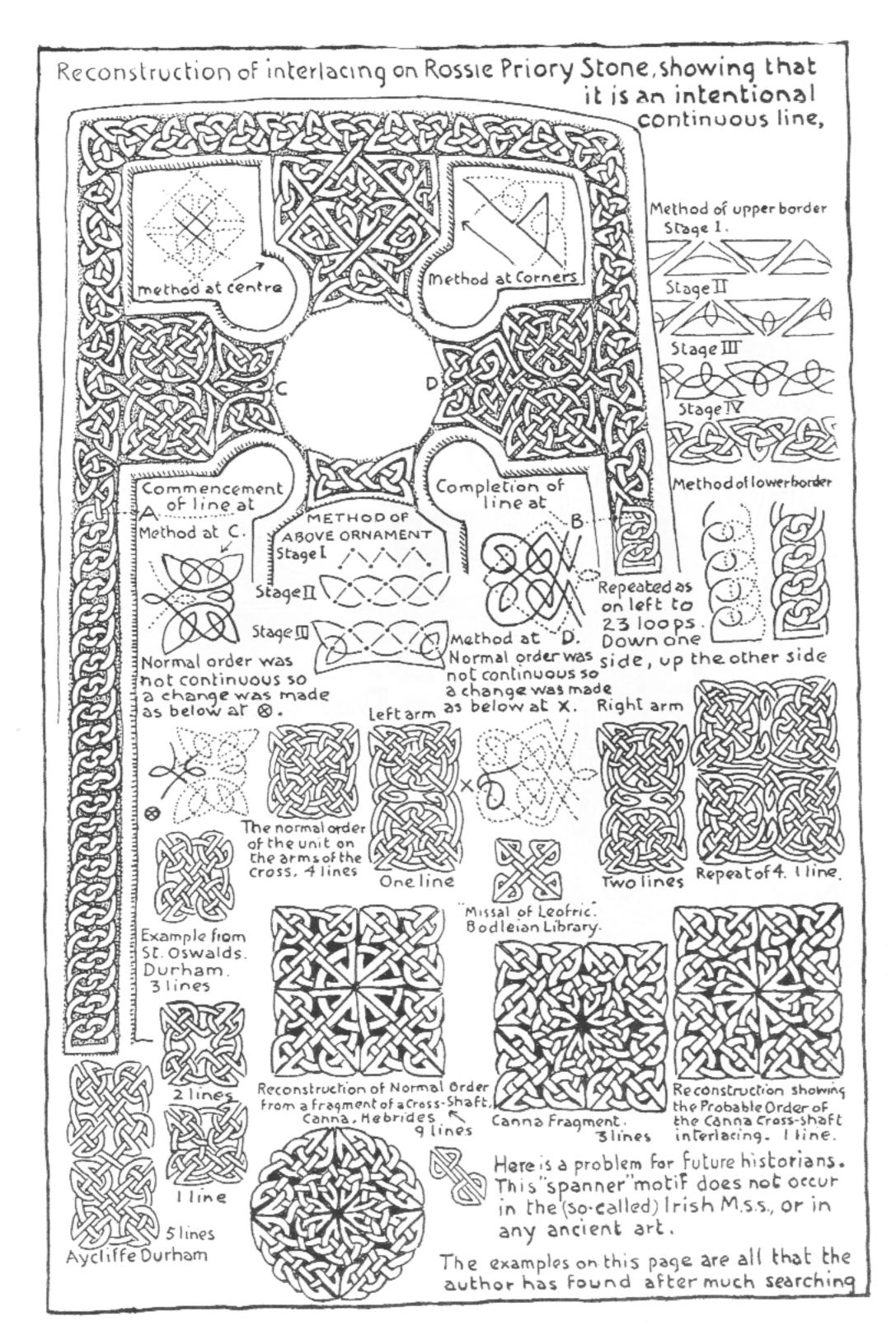
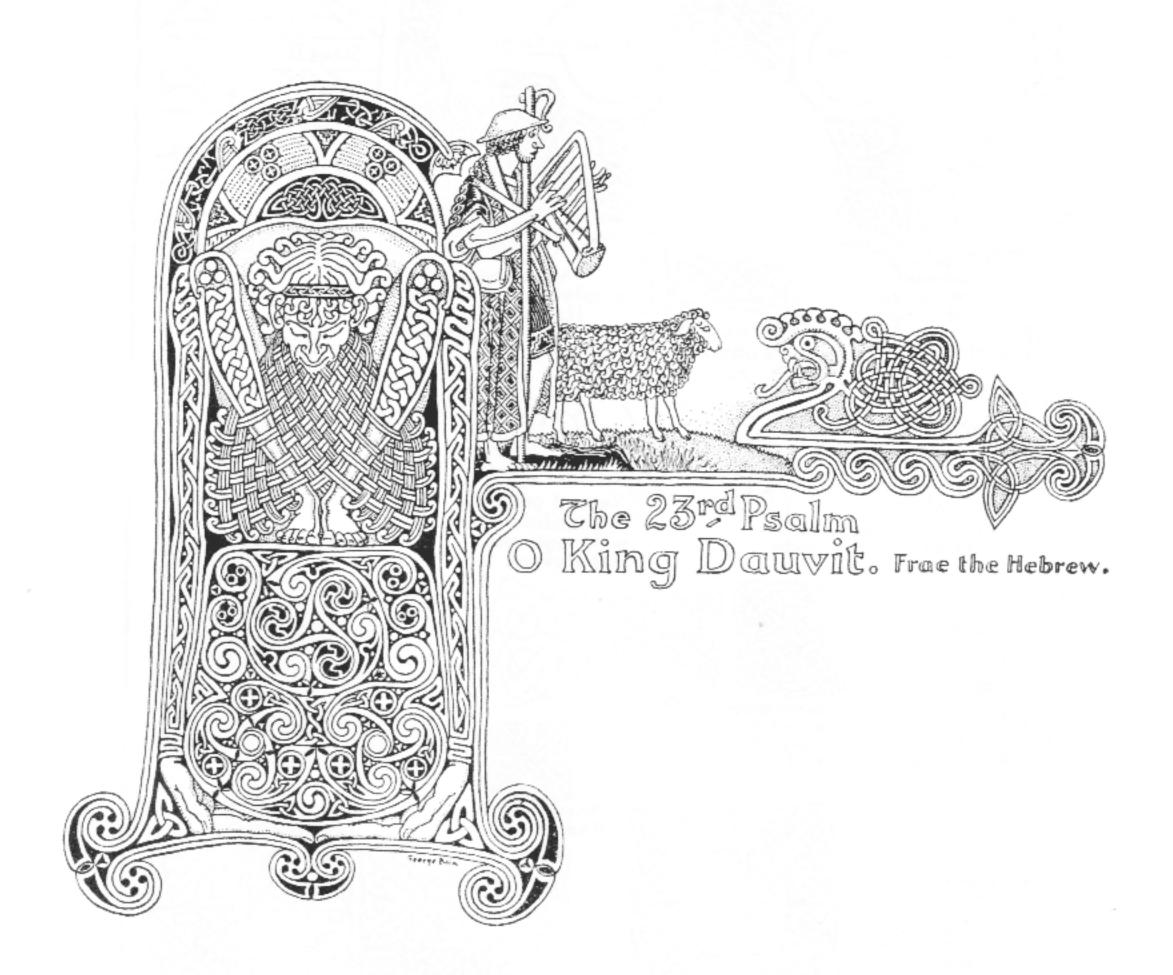


Plate L







## **Spirals**

HE Spiral as a symbol and as an ornament had a beginning at the dawn of man's intellect. It was the development of the inherited impulse that made man construct the first circular hut. With very few exceptions (if any) the constructions by insects, birds and animals are made by circular motions. The circle may be considered as man's first step in art. As a recapitulative impulse it is every child's beginning in drawing, and it is as much used by the educated doodler as it is by the uneducated female for pipe-clay decoration on the doorstep. The spiral is an application of its constructional methods that rapidly became magical. It could be performed to the right or to the left, sunwise or antisunwise.

The beauty of nature's spirals was probably observed by man's earliest ancestors, for the shell was also the container of his staple food.

From the terminating point to the opening in the shell to the food, the movement of the spiral is to the right or sunwise and the motion of extracting the food is to the left or antisunwise.

Most of nature's spirals are to the right with a notable exception in pairs of horns, which are symmetrical. The Scottish Highlander's sworddance, being a war dance, is anti-sunwise, but finishes sunwise symbolical of victory.

An assessment of the dating of the commencement of the use of spirals as an ornamental and magical art may be conjectured from the fact, already stated, that highly developed key patterns, engraved on mammoth ivory were found in the Ukraine and in Yugo-Slavia, and are dated from 25,000 B.C. to 15,000 B.C. Key patterns are really spirals in straight lines, and

man had to travel long in time before he "invented" the square. Although one-coil spirals are to be found in the arts of most peoples of Europe, Asia, Africa, Polynesia and the Americas, with the Greek Ionic as the acme, yet the finest developments of spiral ornament were made by the Celtic race, who at an early period found the methods of making two, three, four or more coils. There is a continuity of the evolution of the spiral three-dimensional art in Scotland, England, Wales and Ireland from preprehistoric times, commencing with two incised points continued as two incised coils that have between them a raised spiral line that revolves back upon itself. This double spiral is also found in the metal bronze-age work of the peoples of the Baltic countries. The Mycenaean artist-craftsman used the spiral motive in a manner that suggests one of the courses of the migration of Celtic peoples to Britain and Ireland. The Egyptians used spirals as all-over motifs from 3000 B.C. to 1500 B.C.

It was in Britain and Ireland, however, that spirals found full artistic growth, first, in the enamelled bronze ornaments for the horse, the chariot and man, then, in the age of the ornamented stone monuments and the late Pagan and early Christian Jewellers' Art.

The noble spirals of Aberlemno, Shandwick, Tarbet, Hilton of Cadboll, Nigg, the Tara brooch, and the Ardagh chalice led the way to the great art of the scribes, who produced the supreme masterpieces of the world's decoration of books, profusely embellished with spiral art.

The few survivors of a great artistic period, the books of Durrow, Kells, Lindisfarne, and St. Chad will shed a light for future generations upon the greatness of the art and the other cultures of the Pict and the Briton.

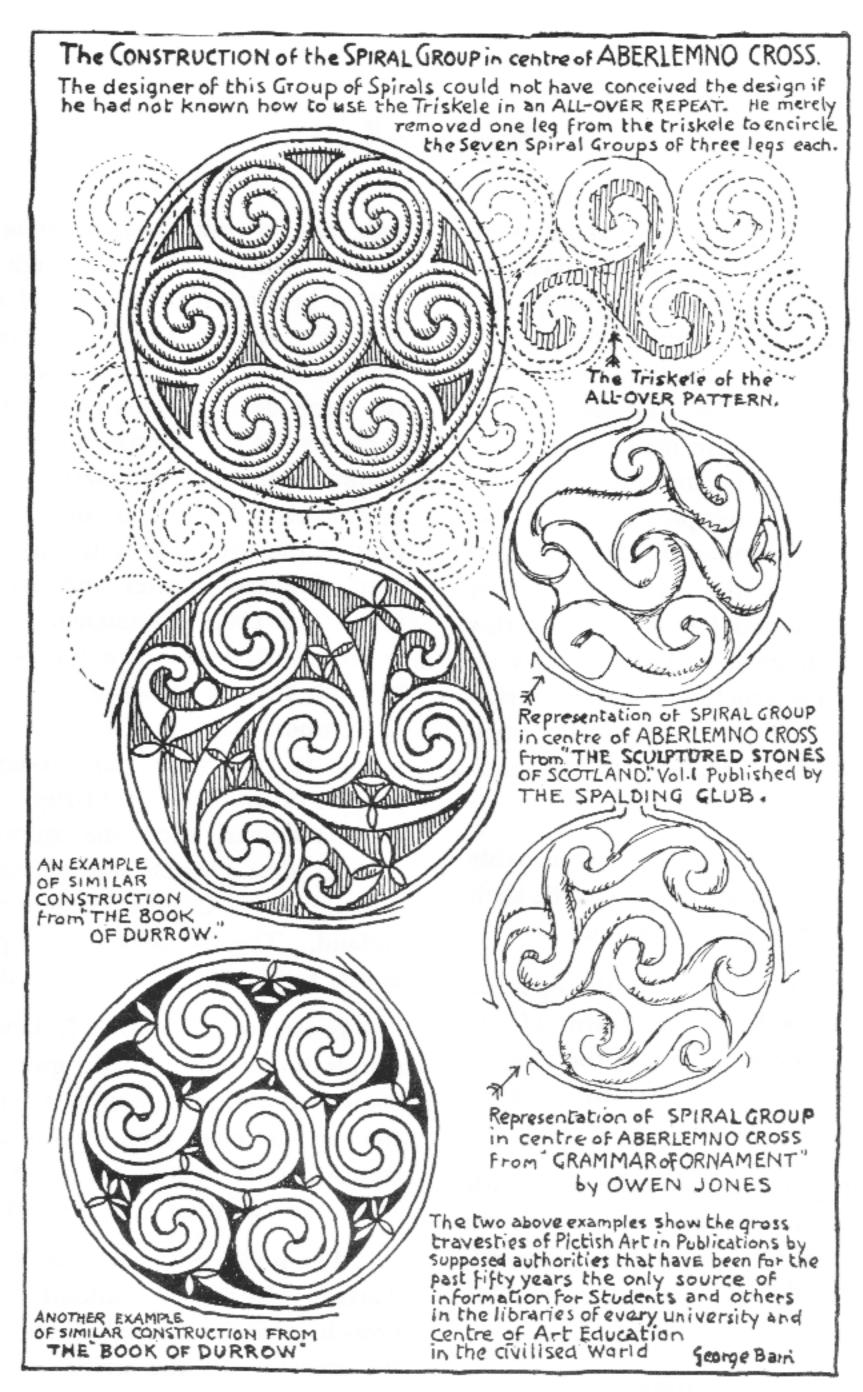
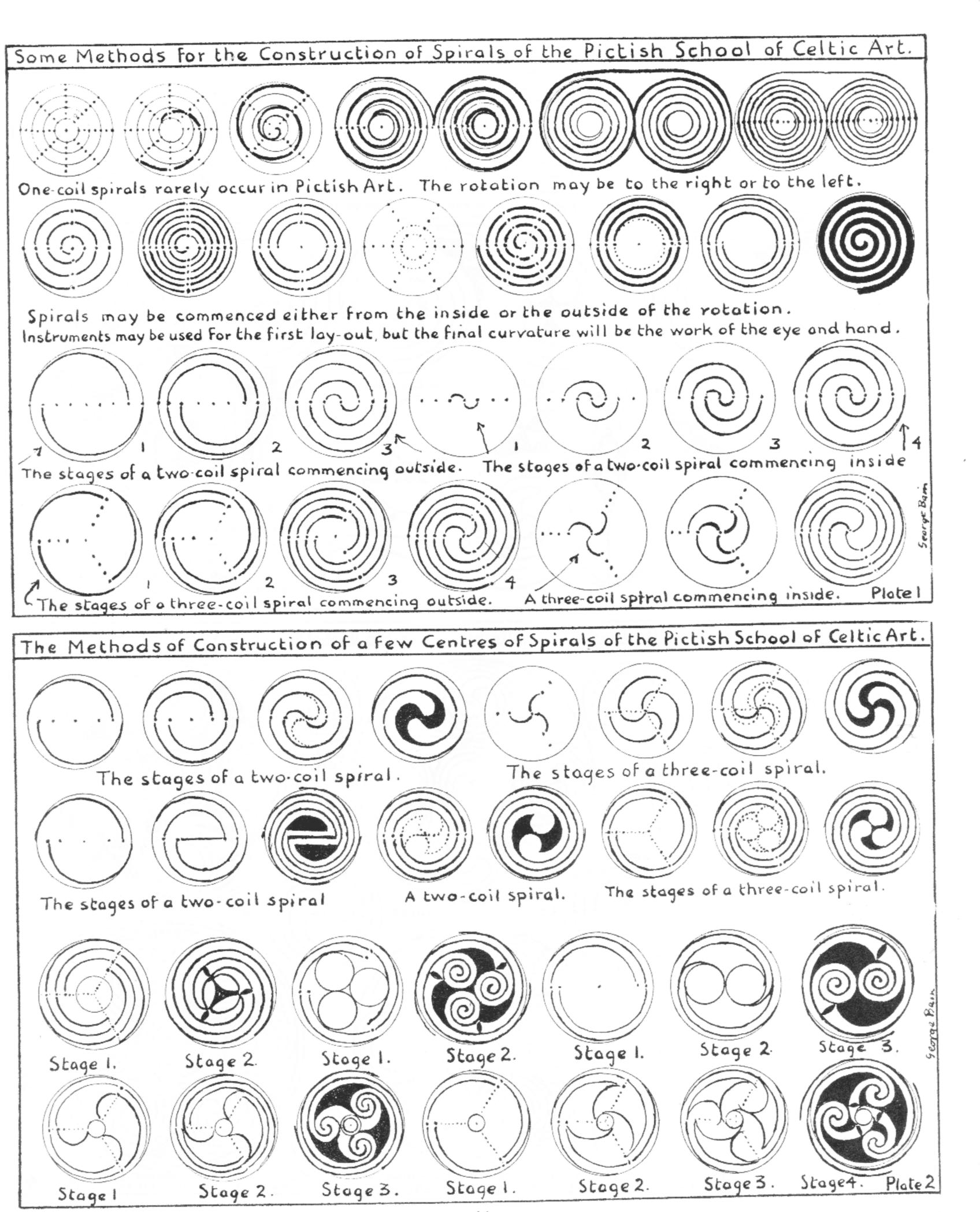
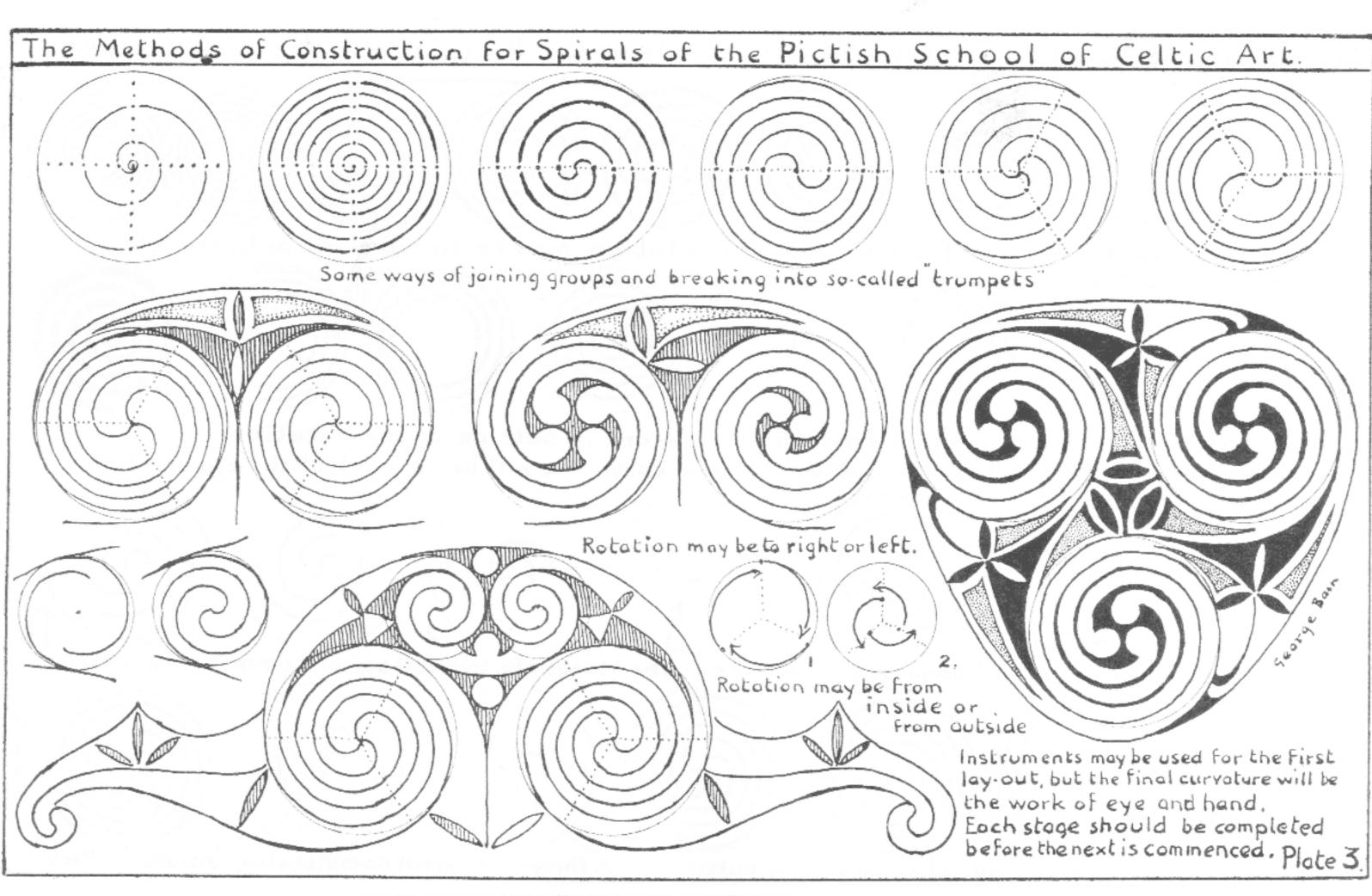
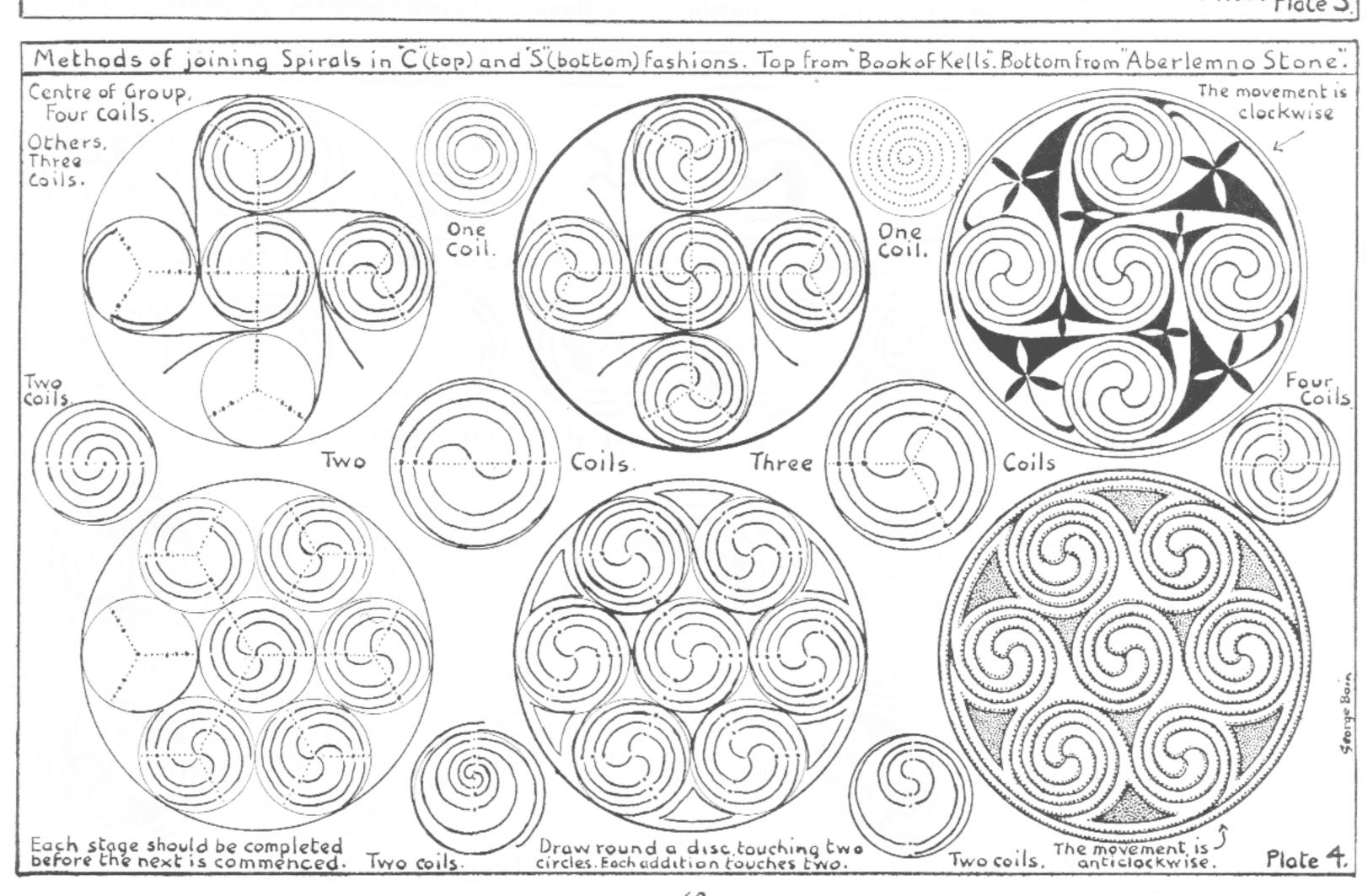


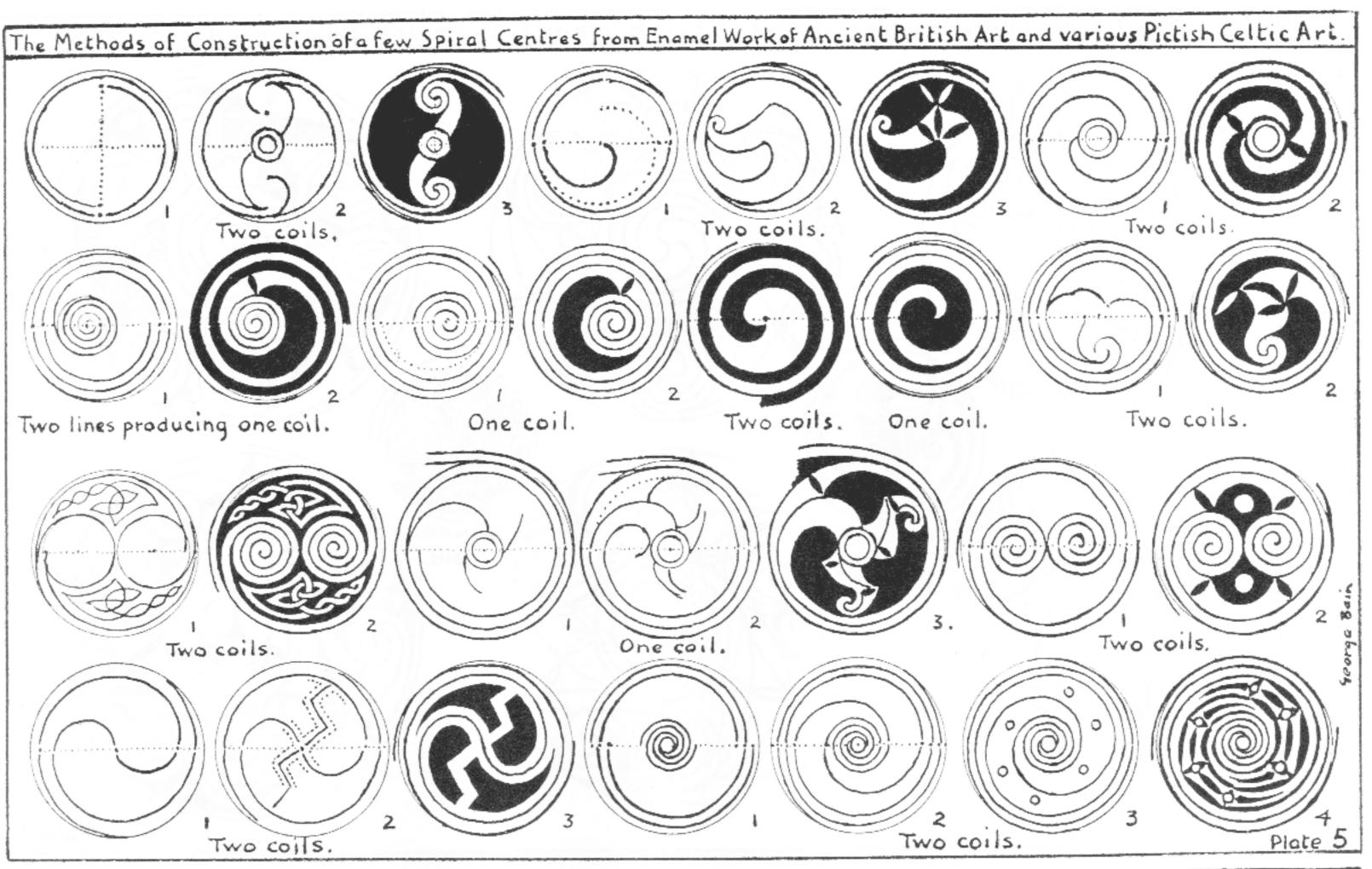
Plate by courtesy of the Gaelic Society of Inverness

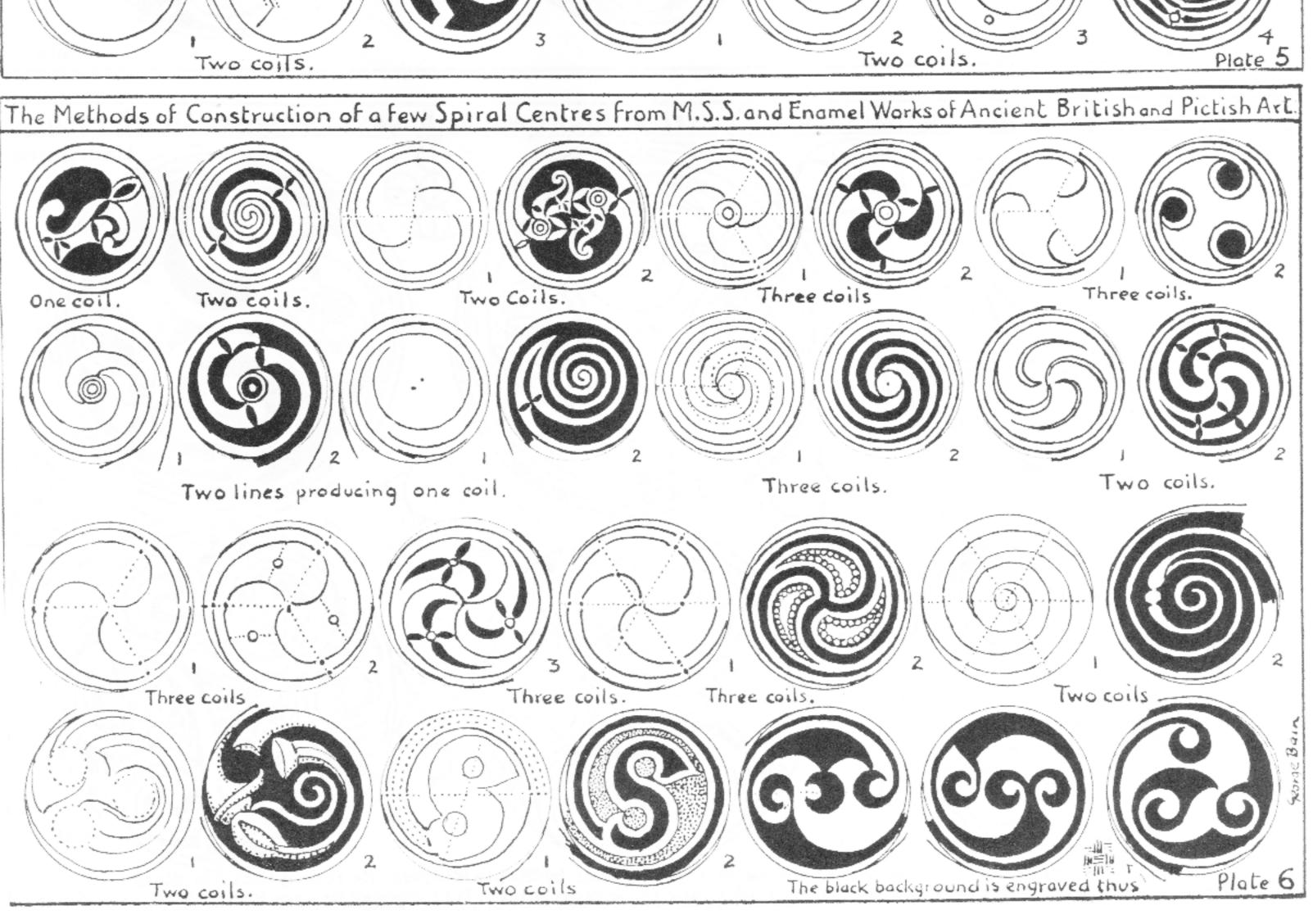
Plate M

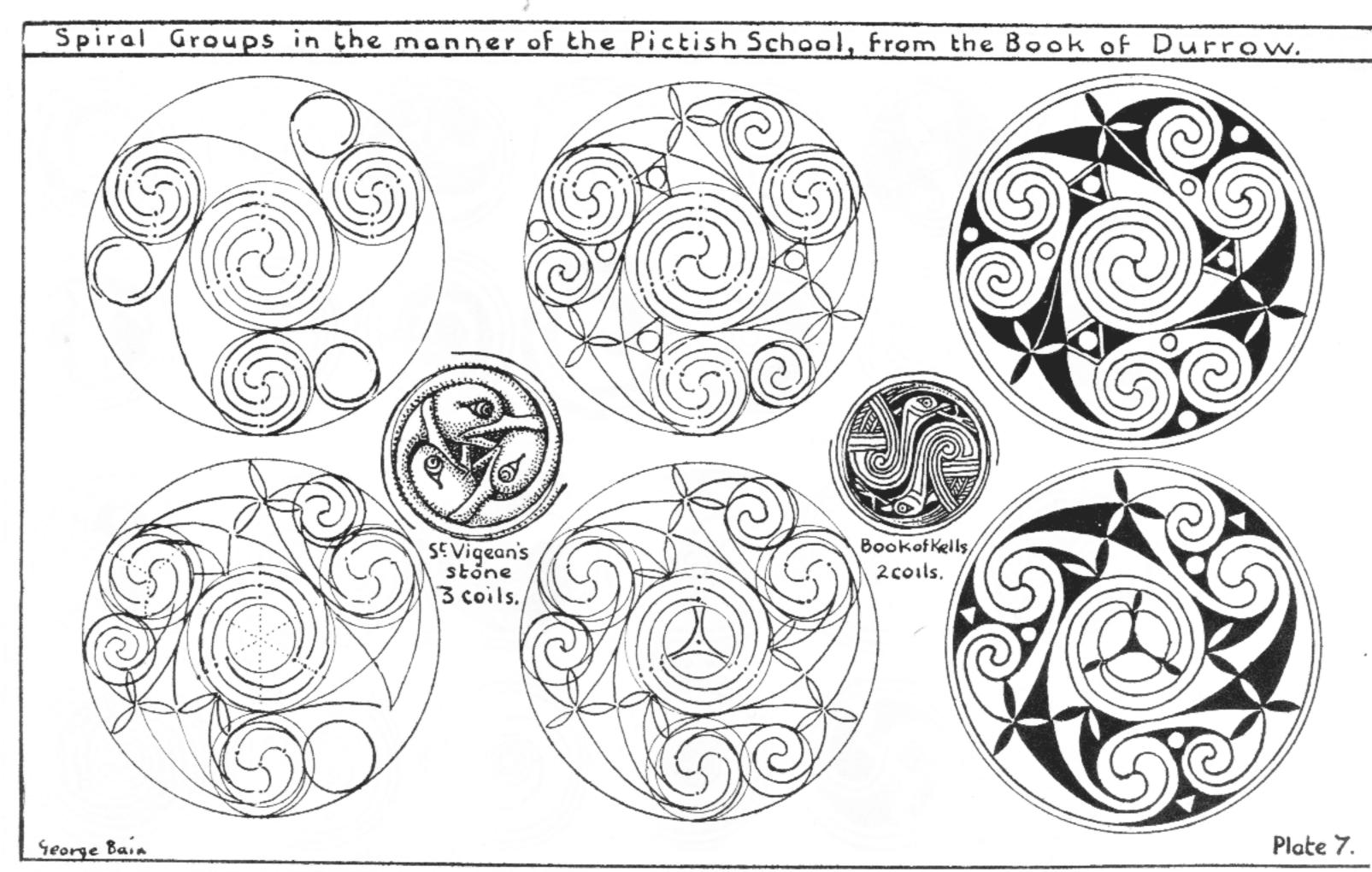












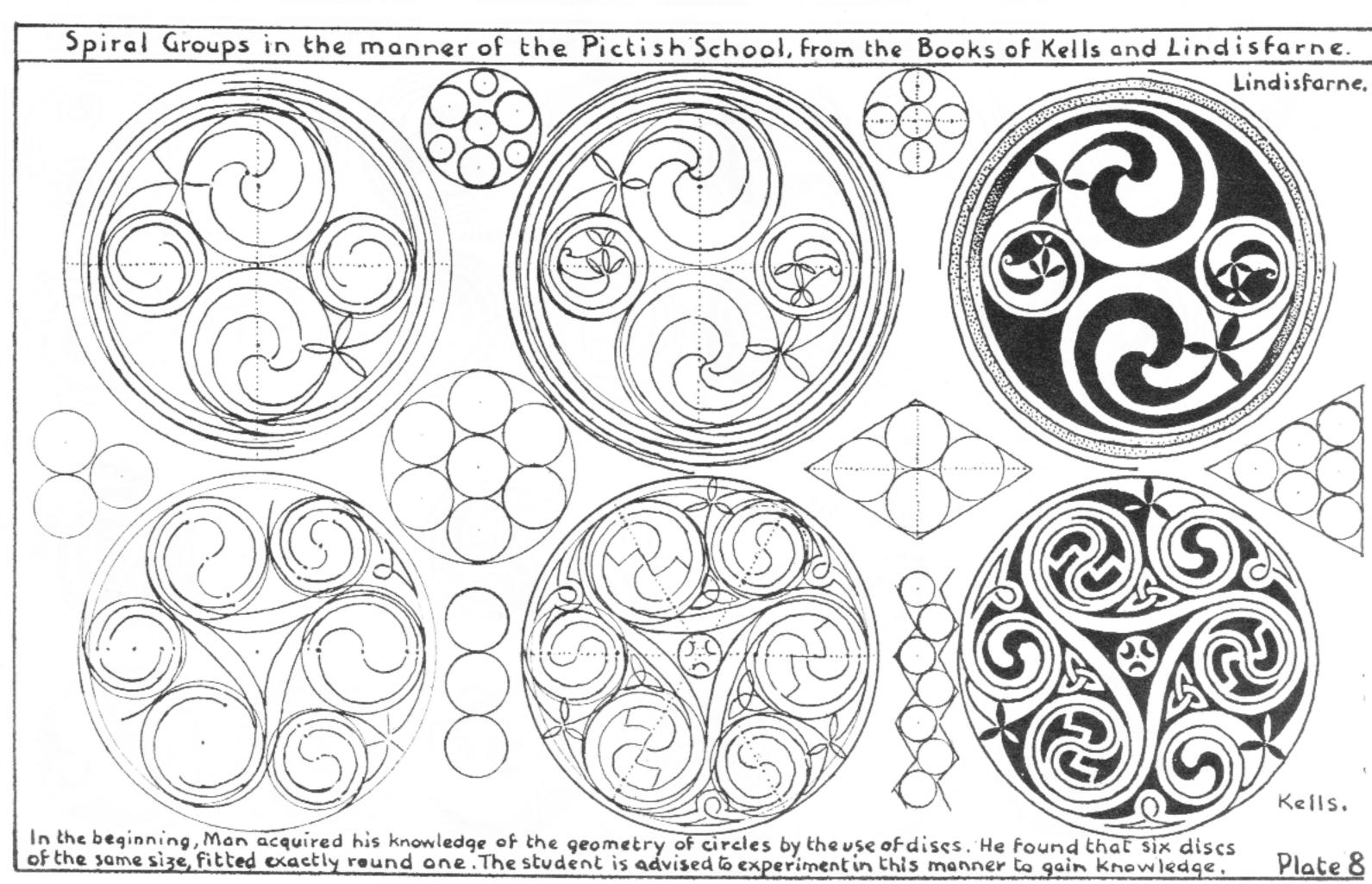
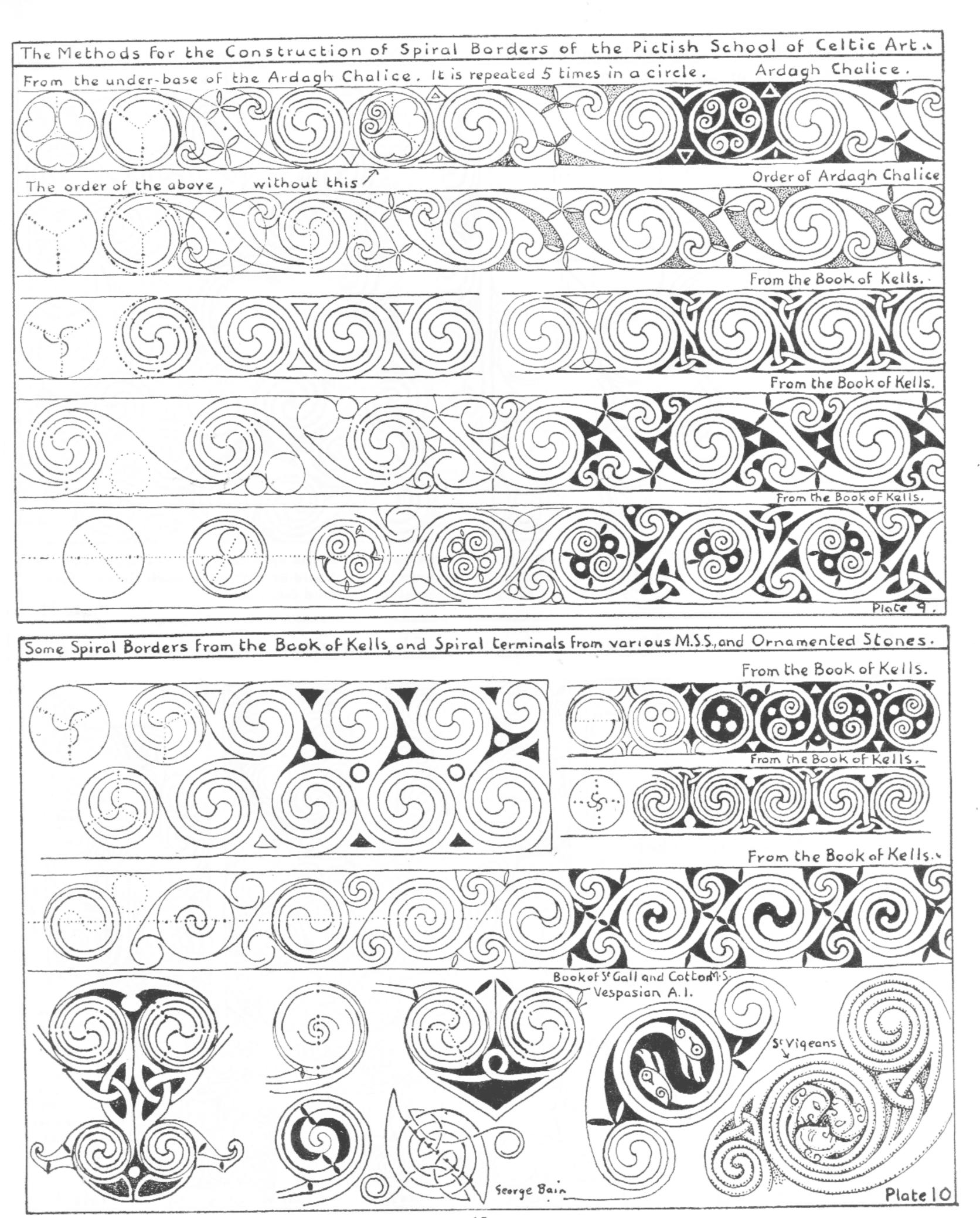
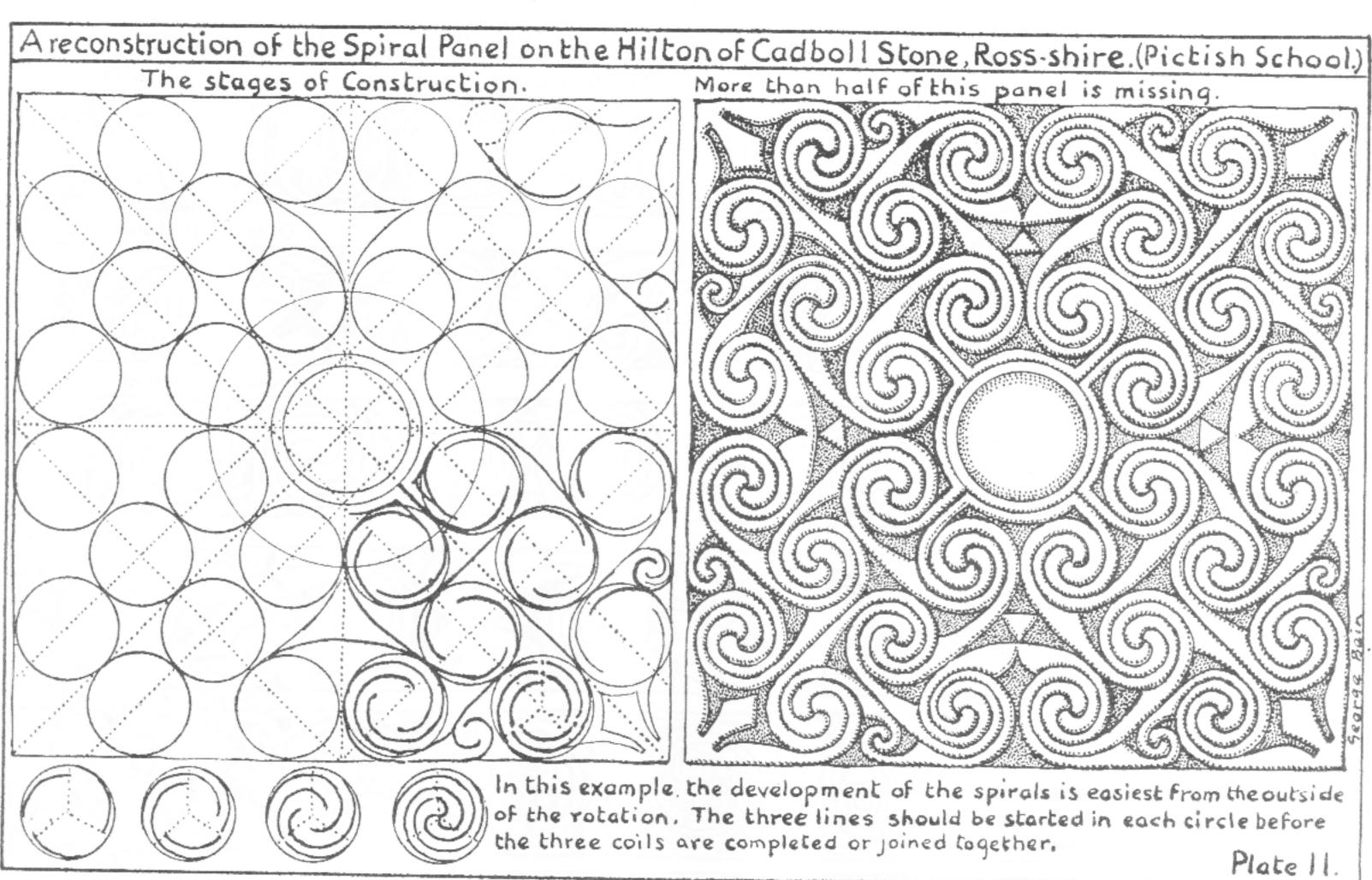
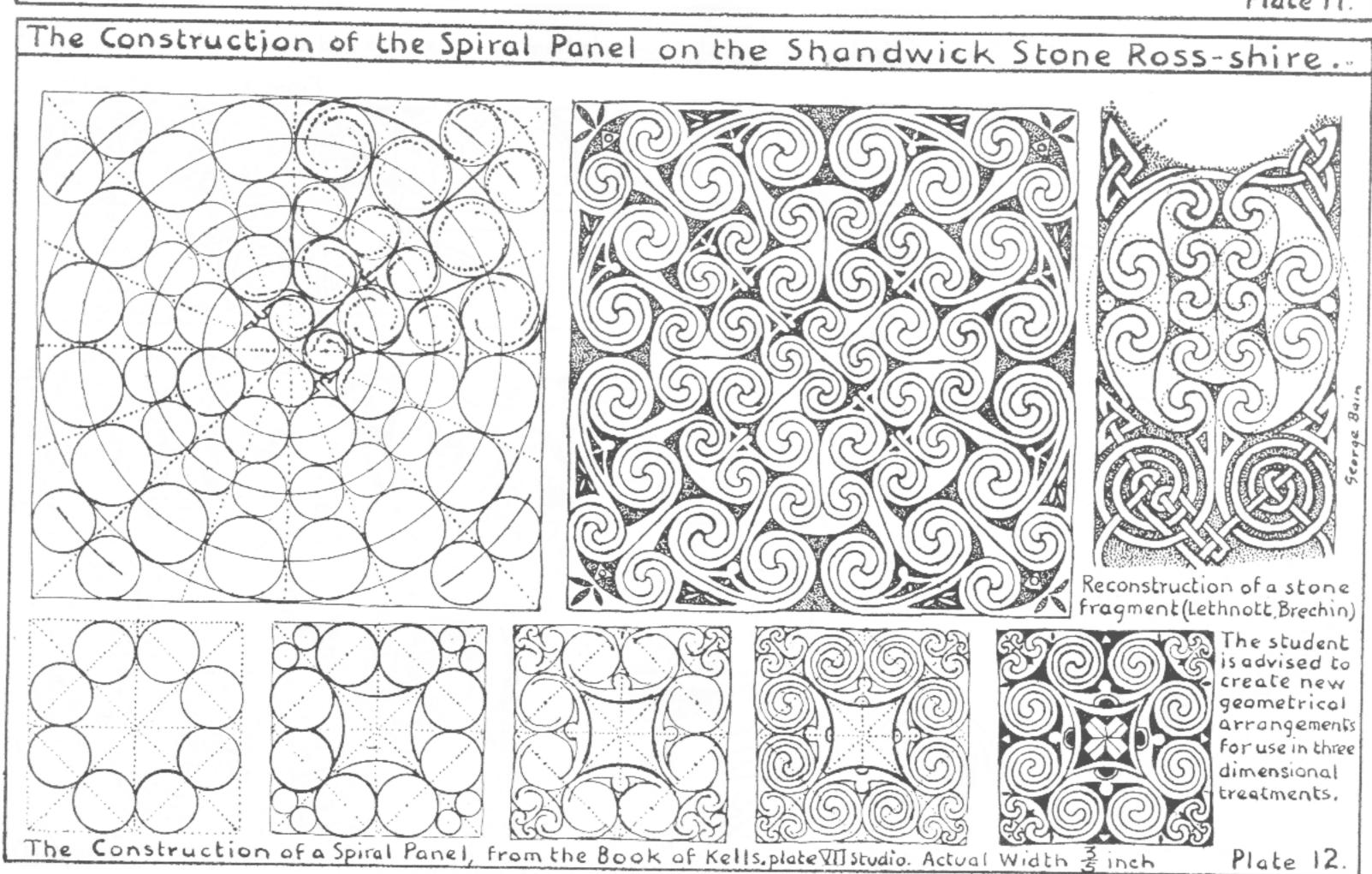
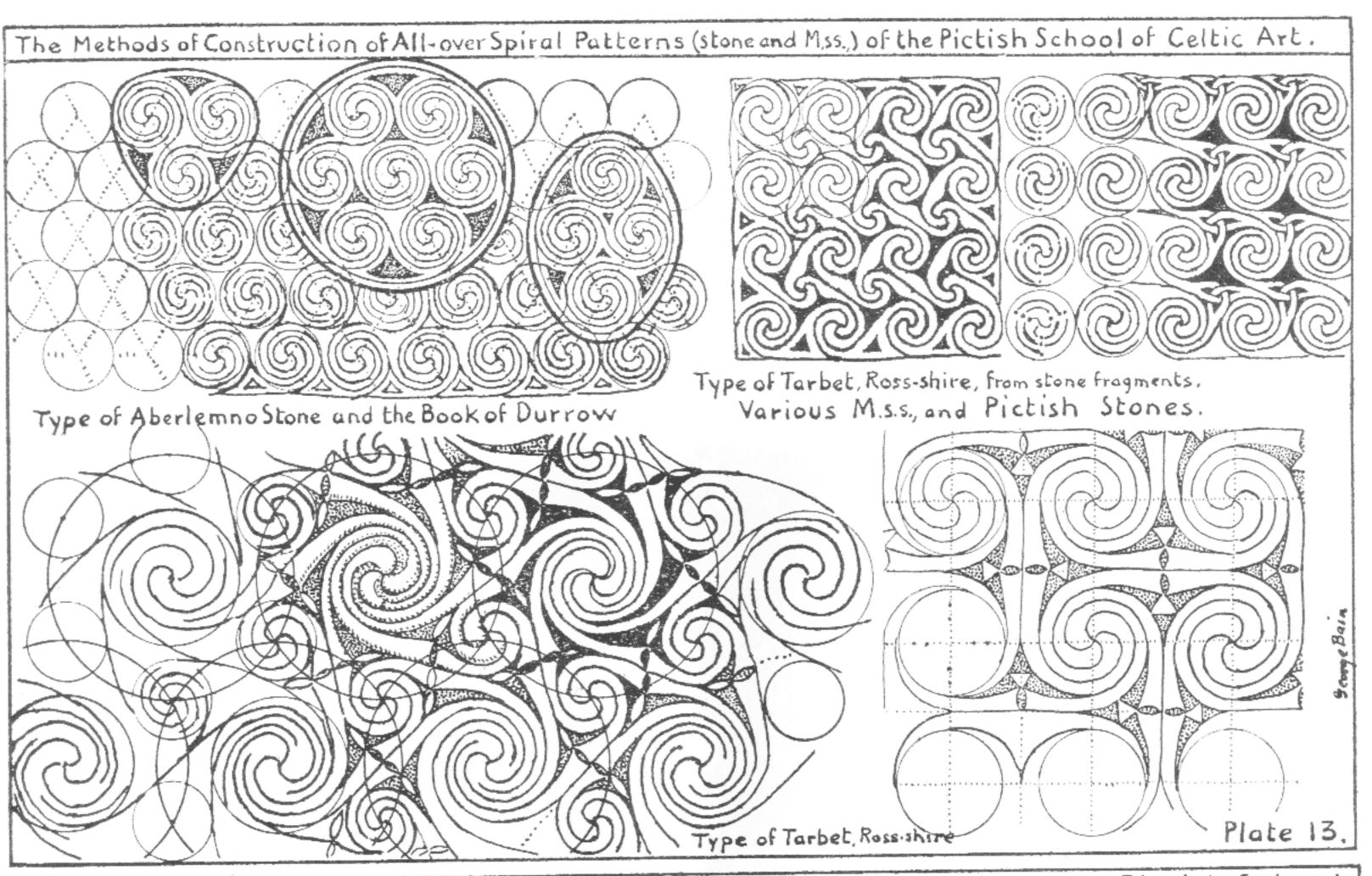


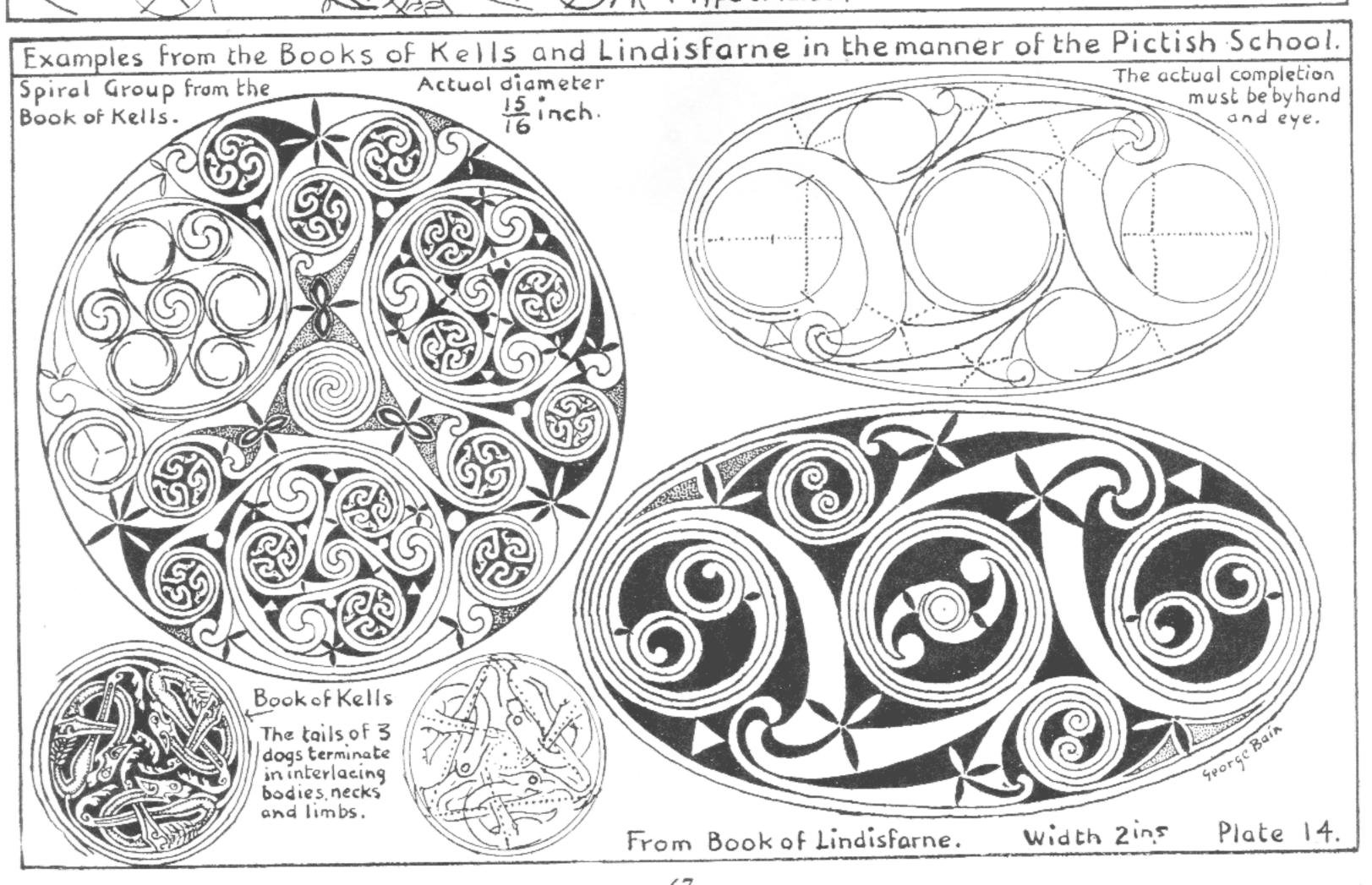
Plate 8



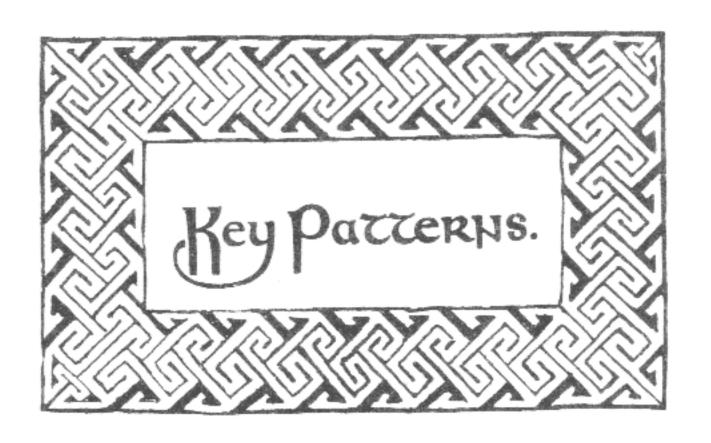












.

,

		*1		

## **Key Patterns**

HERE are numerous references to, and a few descriptions of, Celtic Key Patterns by writers who have been blinded by the "classical" education that still claims to be the basis of all European artistic achievements.

J. Romilly Allen was of the opinion that the essential difference between the classical Key patterns and those used by the Christian Celts of Britain and Ireland, consisted in the introduction of diagonal lines by the latter.

The square Key patterns of the "classical" Greek fret type were seldom used in the art of the Pagan or the Christian peoples of Britain and Ireland. They occur still less in the Pictish School of Celtic Art. The diagonal cross, which at a later period had the Saint Andrew story grafted on it, became the St. Andrew's Cross that emerged in a new dressing to be symbolical of the Scotland that succeeded the Pictland of Malcolm Canmore. This diagonal cross is the basic construction of many key pattern panels and interlacing knotwork panels of Pictish art.

According to J. Romilly Allen, these diagonal arrangements, and the necessary adjustments to fill the spaces in order to fit the pattern to a straight line, are supposed to be the cause of the distinctive Celtic character, but the result, nevertheless, was merely an imitation of the Greek fret. Westwood, who preceded him, had less art knowledge but a greater vision. He described Celtic key patterns as "a series of diagonal lines, forming various kinds of Chinese-like patterns. These ornaments are generally introduced into small compartments, a number of which are arranged so as to form the large initial letters and borders, or tesselated pages, with which the finest manuscripts are decorated."

Some Chinese key patterns belonging to periods prior to B.C. 1000 are very similar to the Pictish key patterns. What is probably a reference to key patterns is in the Old Testament, 1st Kings, chapter 7, verse 31, in the description of the building of Solomon's House. This is dated B.C. 1005. "And also upon the mouth of it were gravings with their borders, four-square, not round." This qualification "not

round "suggests that the reference in 2nd Kings, chapter 25, verse 17 (Solomon's Temple of the Lord) is to spirals as a more customary form of ornament. "And like unto these had the second pillar with wreathen work."

In the British Museum there is a much damaged Egyptian carving in ivory of a priest whose robe shows a key pattern panel and interlacings on its borders. It is dated at B.C. 3500—B.C. 3000.

The most interesting of all discoveries are those of the square and diagonal key patterns engraved on mammoth ivories in the Ukraine and Yugo-Slavia and dated by authoritics as the period B.C. 20,000 to B.C. 15,000. Many of these are panelled like the key panels of the Ornamented stones of East Pictland, from Durham to Caithness, and also like those of the Books of Durrow, Kells, Lindisfarne, and other Early Celtic MSS.

An example of this great art of distant prehistory is shown in this text-book on Plate 14. It is from a pair of bracelets made of mammoth ivory, and the pattern is engraved. The unit of the design is a swastika with anti-clockwise motion. The interlocking swastikas are part of an all-over pattern, and it will serve to draw attention to the mathematical and geometrical knowledge and the engraving skill that was necessary.

A very small percentage of the inhabitants of the present-day civilised Europe could copy it without the instructions given on the plate, and fewer still could make a new design comparable with it. On Plate 13 of the spiral text-book the triskele unit of the spiral group in the centre of the cross of the Aberlemno Stone is also anti-clockwise and a portion of an all-over pattern. In both cases the symbols are magical and are probably charms to avert evil.

The Isle of Man Triskele symbol has suffered at the hands of a waggish invader, who added a foot to each of what looked to him like three legs. Later these legs and feet became encased in armour. This is on a par with those places having the Celtic name Reston or Restan that are on the top of a hill (being probably on the

site of a hill fort). The wags turned the name into Rest and (be thankful).

There are many examples of human figures, animals and birds arranged in triskele and swastika designs on Pictish stones and in Celtic MSS. On Plate 13 of the Studio publication of a number of the finest pages of the Book of Kells in colours, there are six circles with diameters of less than half an inch and each containing three men with a forearm of each forming the triskele. Each man has a leg thrown over his forearm, and he is complete with hair, topknot, beard and ciothing.

Four of the circles have clockwise and two anti-clockwise motion.

The Pre-Columbus Central American key patterns used by the priests of the Maya religion to decorate the interiors and exteriors of their temples of cruciform (Greek cross) plan, as at Mitla, are not carved or incised. They are designed so that the projections of the prepared stones or bricks produced the patterns, and the keys are both square and diagonal, resembling those of the Perthshire Pictish type named by Romilly Allen the "Tree key pattern." This special use of prepared stones or bricks by the Maya priests to produce key patterns in the building of their temples is proof that key patterns were long antecedent. The key patterns of the Pre-Columbus Central American, Mexican, and South American pottery that also contained the highly stylised spiral, animal, bird and human decorations have much that is comparable to Pictish art.

The first Spanish invaders of Central America were astonished to find in the Maya temples highly ornamented carvings of stone crosses that were held in the greatest reverence. The proportions of this type of cross are very similar to those of the Pictish cross-slab stones. The Maya priests were manuscript artists of great skill, who decorated their books profusely with colours. The religious intolerance of the Spanish priests led to the almost total destruction of this form of Maya art. The "Dresden" Maya MS. is one of the very few survivors of the fury that grew out of and obscured the simple teachings of Christ.

The manuscripts, records and chronicles of the early British and Pictish Christian churches suffered a somewhat similar destruction at the hands of the Augustine Church over the differences of dogma and over the use of the "Barbaric" native language instead of polished Latin in the writing of the Gospels. The manuscripts that survived were again greatly reduced in numbers by the Viking raids and, later, in the throes of the Reformation.

The connections between Scythian, Mycenaean, Cretan, Maltese and the British and Irish Celtic art cultures are very apparent in key and spiral patterns.

The labyrinth or maze and the meander symbols have both influenced the key patterns of the Pictish school of Celtic art. The labyrinth is to be found in the Books of Durrow, Kells, Lindisfarne, and probably in other early Celtic MSS. It is repeated four times on the X of the Christ name-page of the Book of Kells, and there is an excellent example of an ornamented stone with a labyrinth design in the National Museum, Dublin. The "classicists" will find difficulty in attributing Maya key patterns and other art symbols to Greek sources, though the connection between Egyptian, Greek, Roman, Maya, Chinese and Pictish key patterns becomes clearer when considered in juxtaposition with the B.C. 20,000—B.C. 15,000 Ukrainian and old Serbian key patterns. Viewed in this way, it will become apparent that key patterns and also spirals and interlacings, as represented by the fret, the Ionic spiral and the guilloche, are exotics in Greek art. They are invaders due to contact with migrating peoples.

From the first appearance of the Greek nationality that emerged from the union of the various tribes there does not appear to have been any religious prohibitions of the copying of created forms of life. The religions of many Asiatic races prohibited the copying of living things, "in the heavens, on the earth, or in the waters under the earth." The Pictish people appear to have been strictly forbidden to copy plants or any form of vegetation until the Christian era, and then it was used rarely and only symbolically until after the seventh century, when it commenced a decadence that finally destroyed the art. Before this period the plant which was used, with very few exceptions, emerged from a pot. The whole of its growth was continuous and it threw off branches that terminated in a horn or cornucopia to throw off other branches. It was sometimes developed into interlacings or knotwork with men, animals, reptiles, birds and occasionally fish. The leaves and fruits or berries resemble mistletoe more

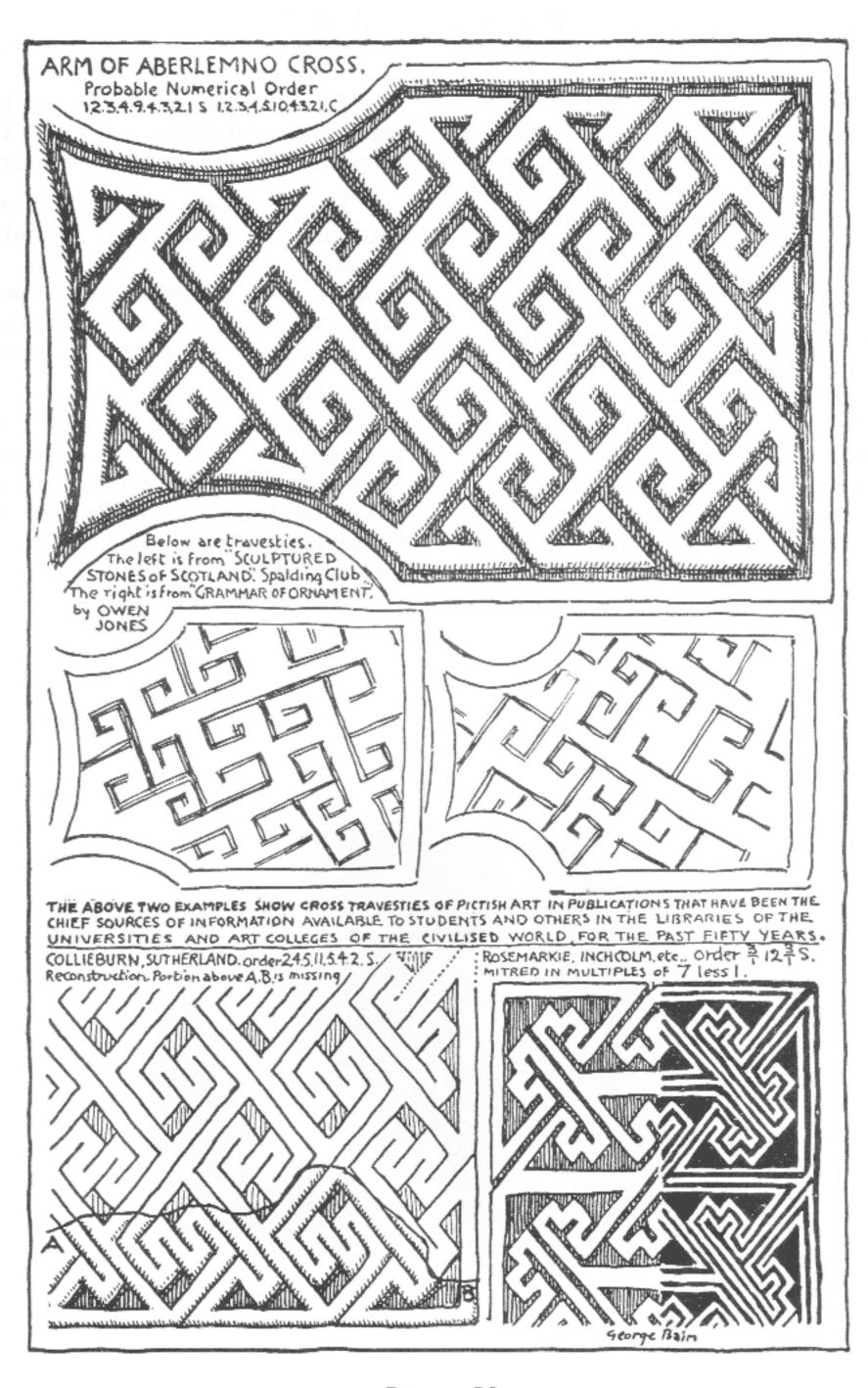
## CELTIC ART

than the "classical" vine, and the potted plant symbol is probably the "tree of life." Taken with the other symbols mentioned, it is apparent that they are the total of living things. Man, animal, bird, reptile, fish, insect and plant are all on the X Christ name-page of the Book of Kells. This plant or tree symbol of life emerging from a pot is to be found on some of the Pictish ornamented cross-slab stones, for example at Nigg, and occurs in the Book of Kells where its minuteness has hitherto hidden most of it. It is connected with Persian and Chinese-Turkestan art. In a fragment of Maya MS., the "Borgian Codex," two priests each hold an inverted pot from which emerges a plant with one long stem with numerous willow-like leaves and terminating in fruits or berries. Beneath the archway thus formed is a small man, or his soul, undergoing an examination of a sort. There is a somewhat similar representation in Egyptian art.

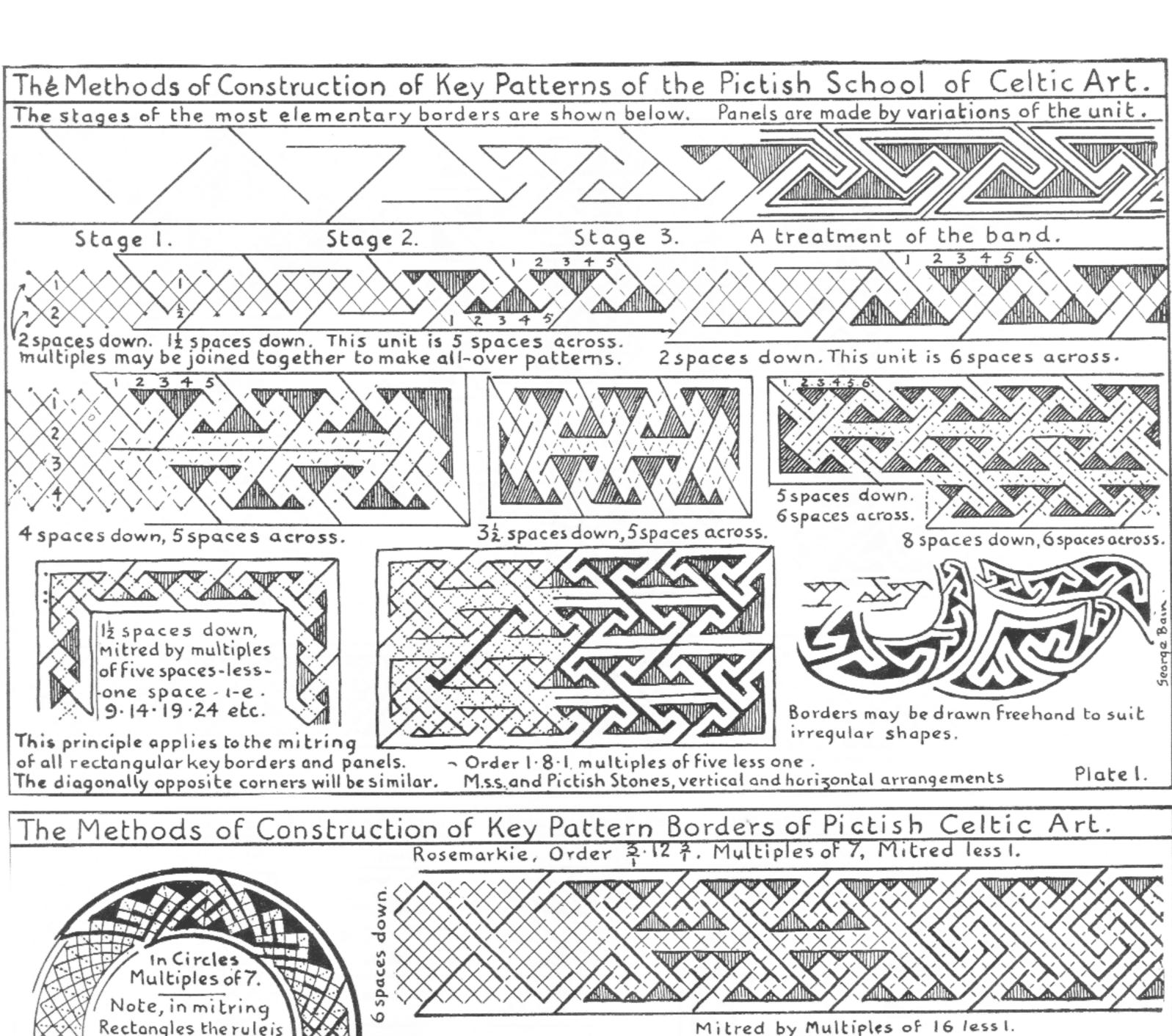
The evidences available show that the key patterns of Britain and Ireland arrived many centuries before the Romans, and that the peoples who brought them made contacts in their migrations with the tribes that later became the makers of the Greek Empire.

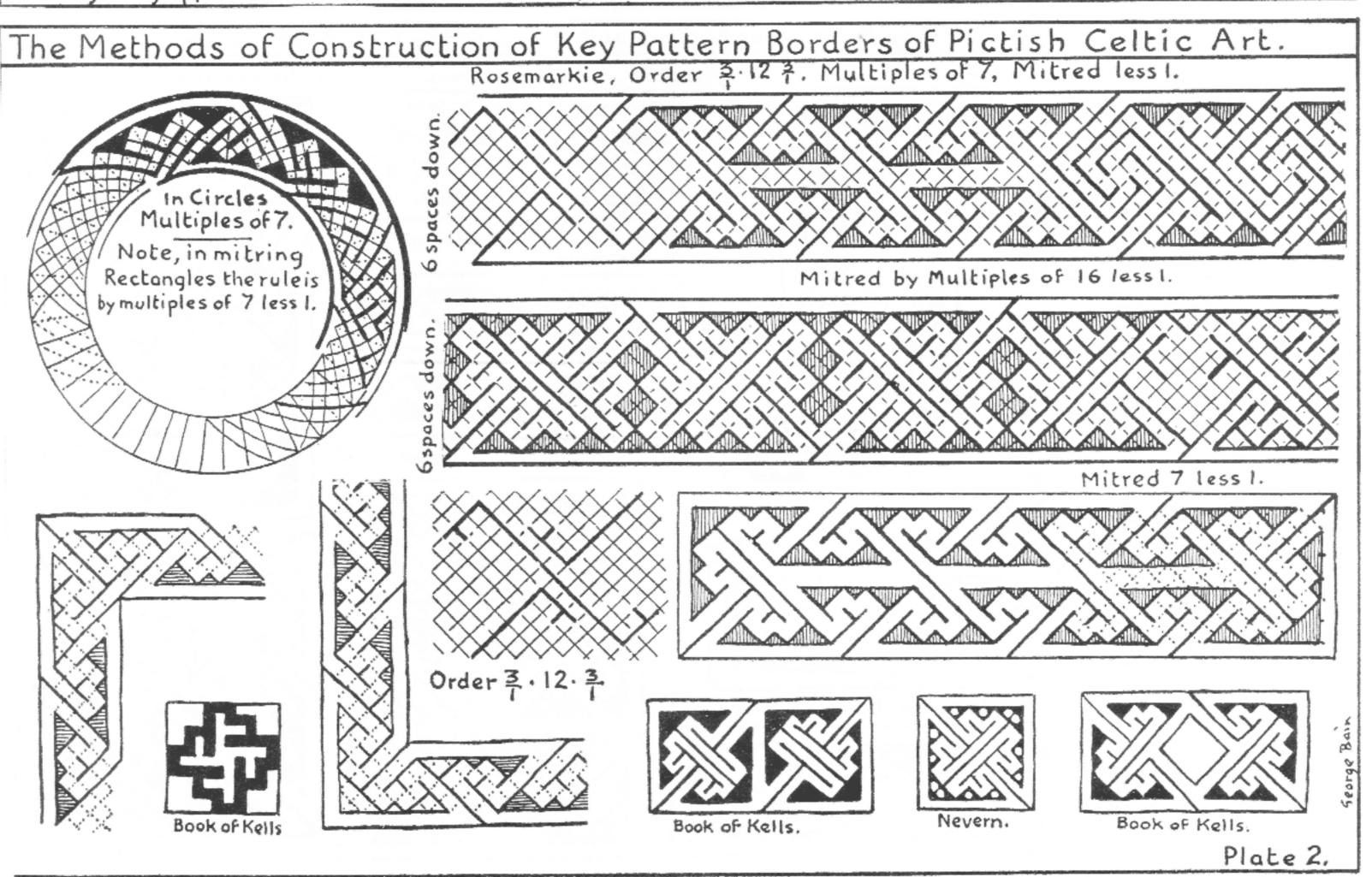
"The Classicists," however, have another explanation, i.e. from a Greek source to Roman, to Byzantine, and then as a by-product of Early Byzantine Christian Art to the British and Irish Art to be distorted into the Celtic version of the Greek key pattern. The evidences that are now available do not uphold this view.

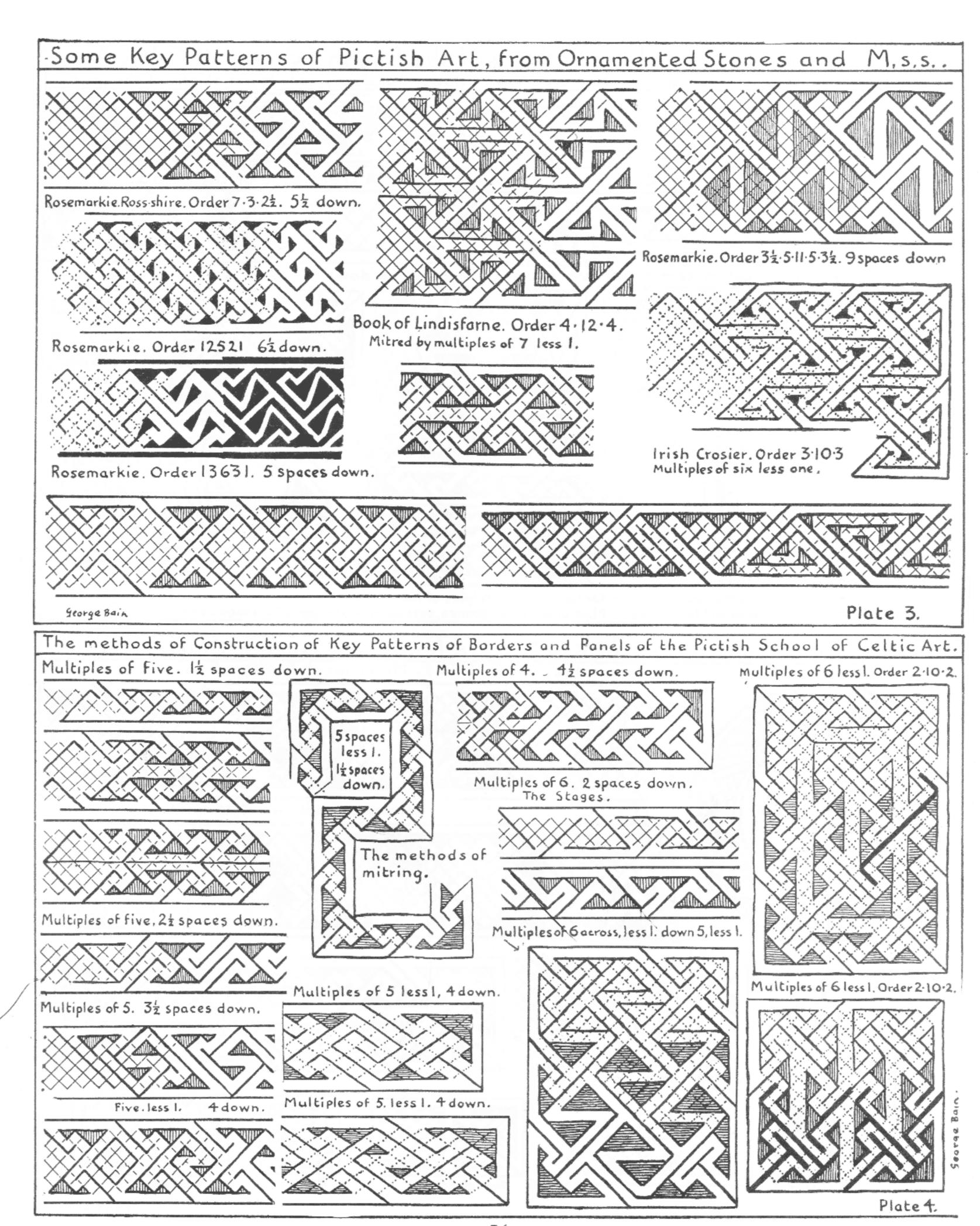


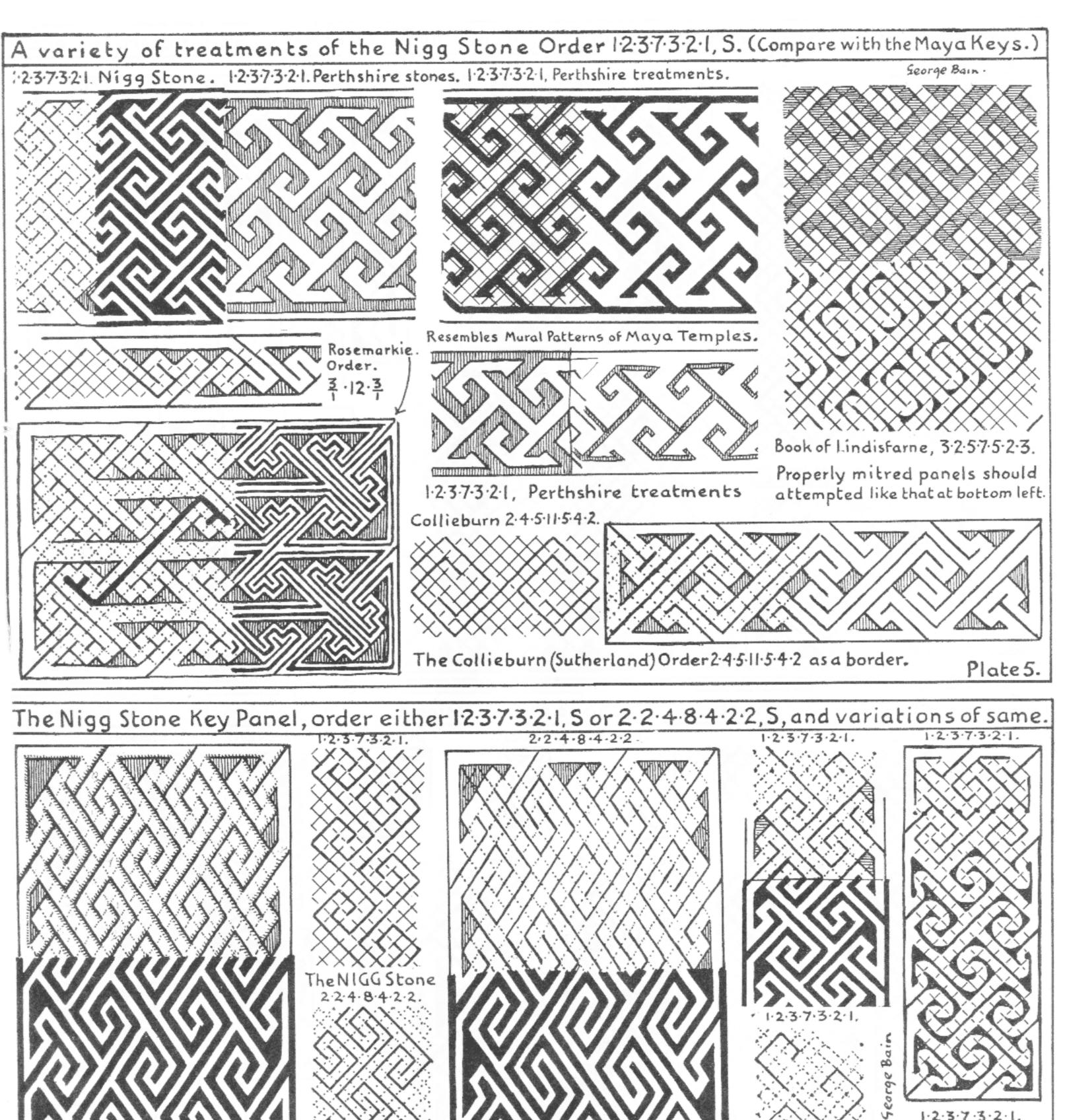


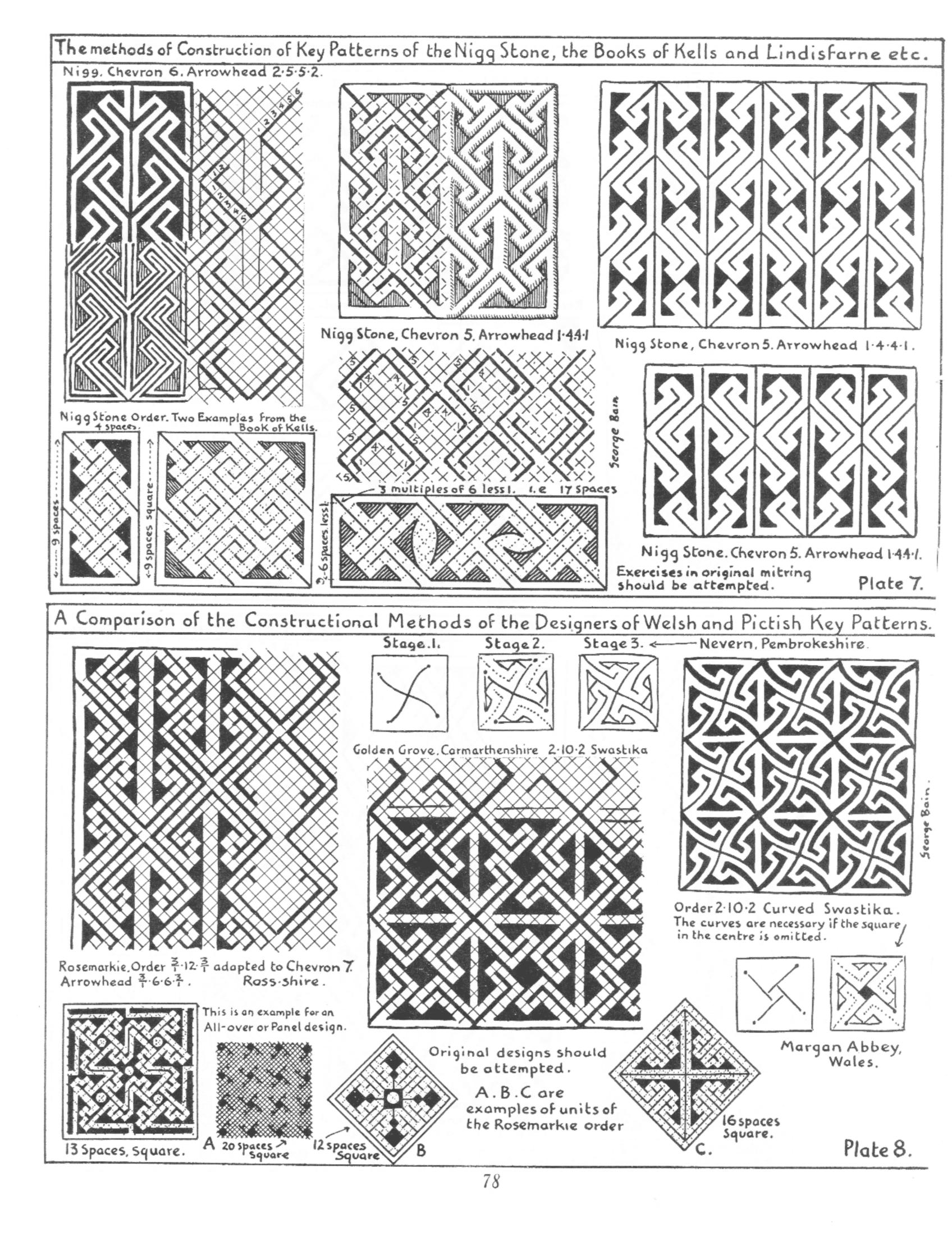
 $Plate\ N$ 

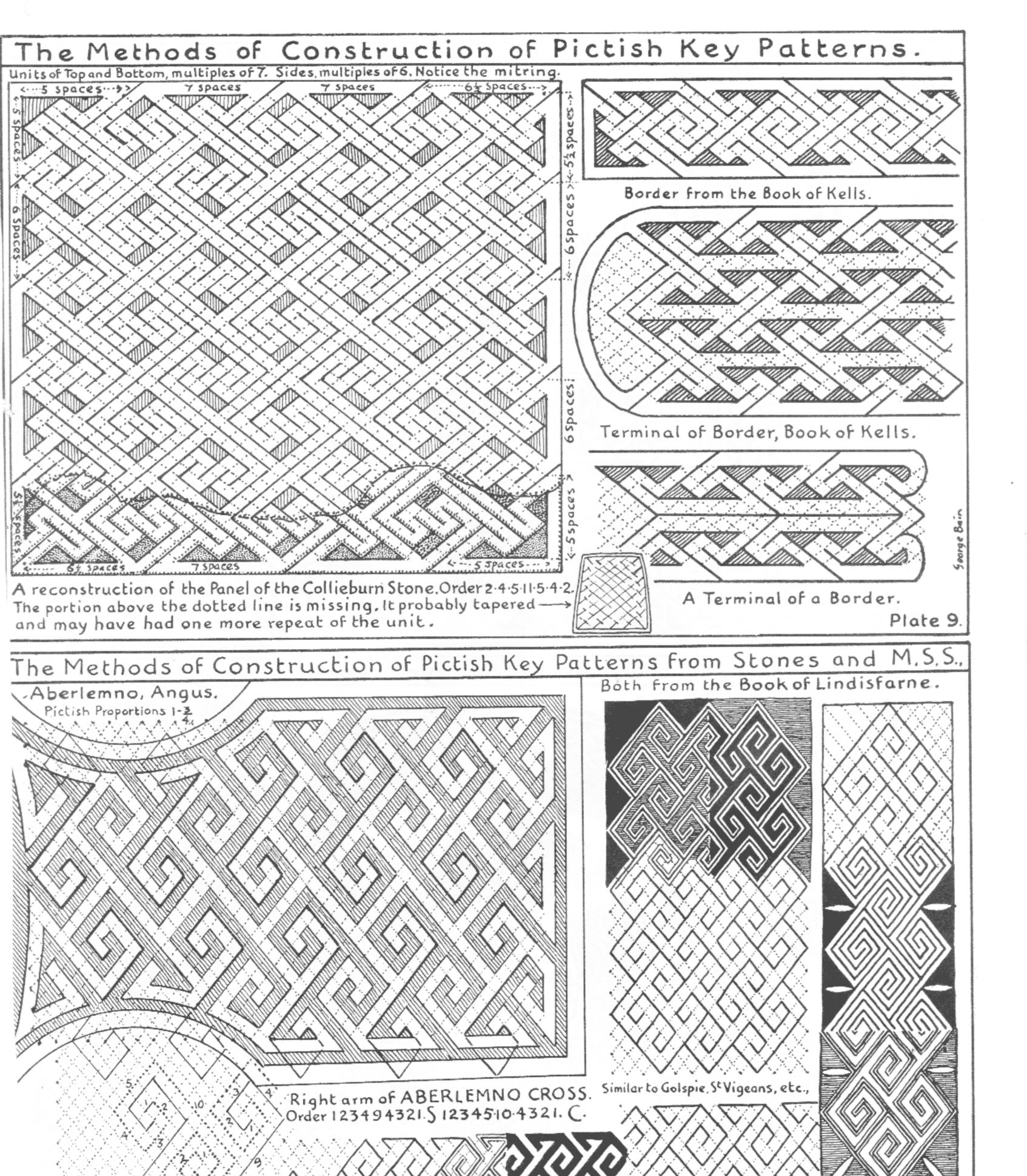






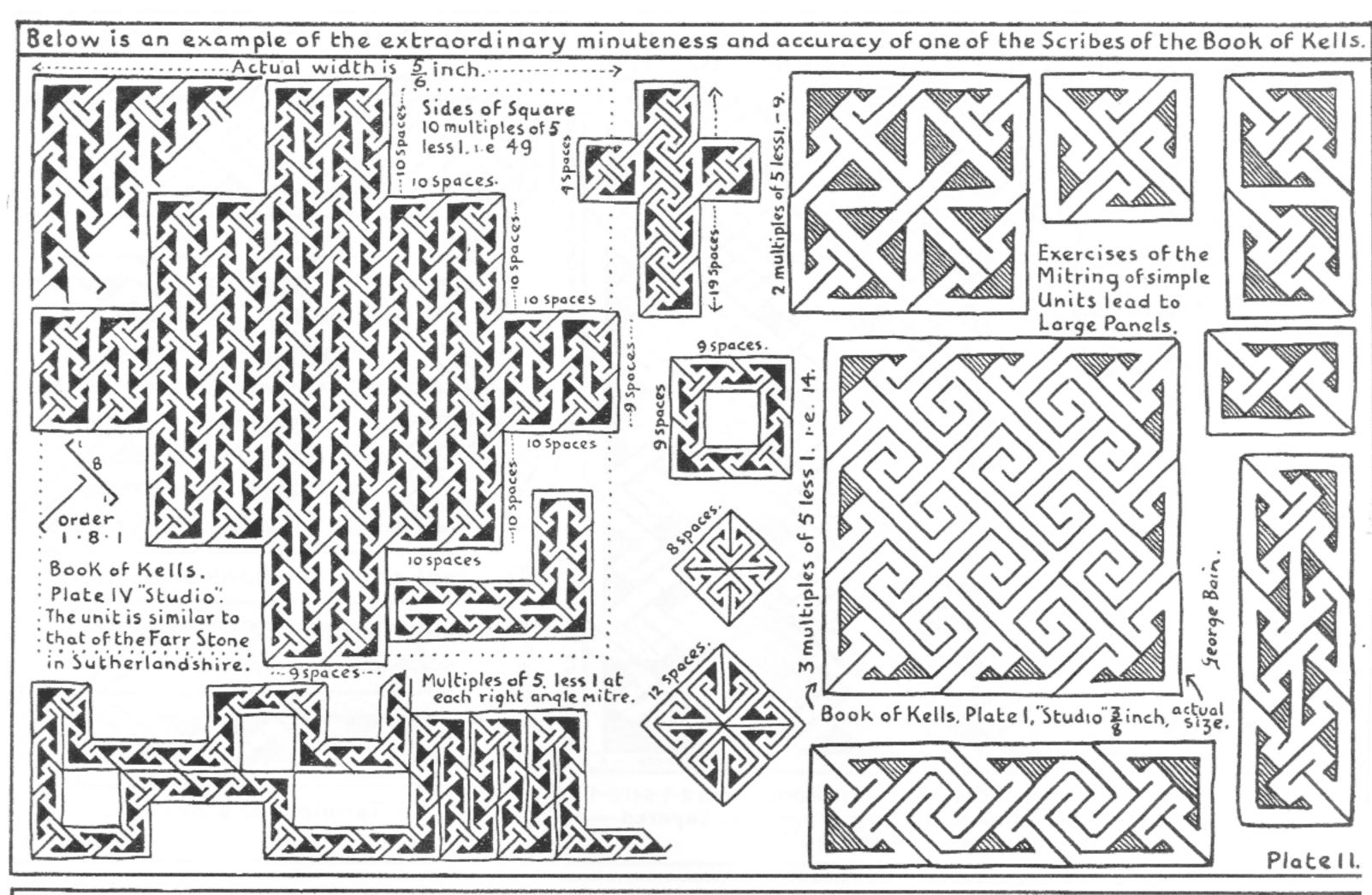


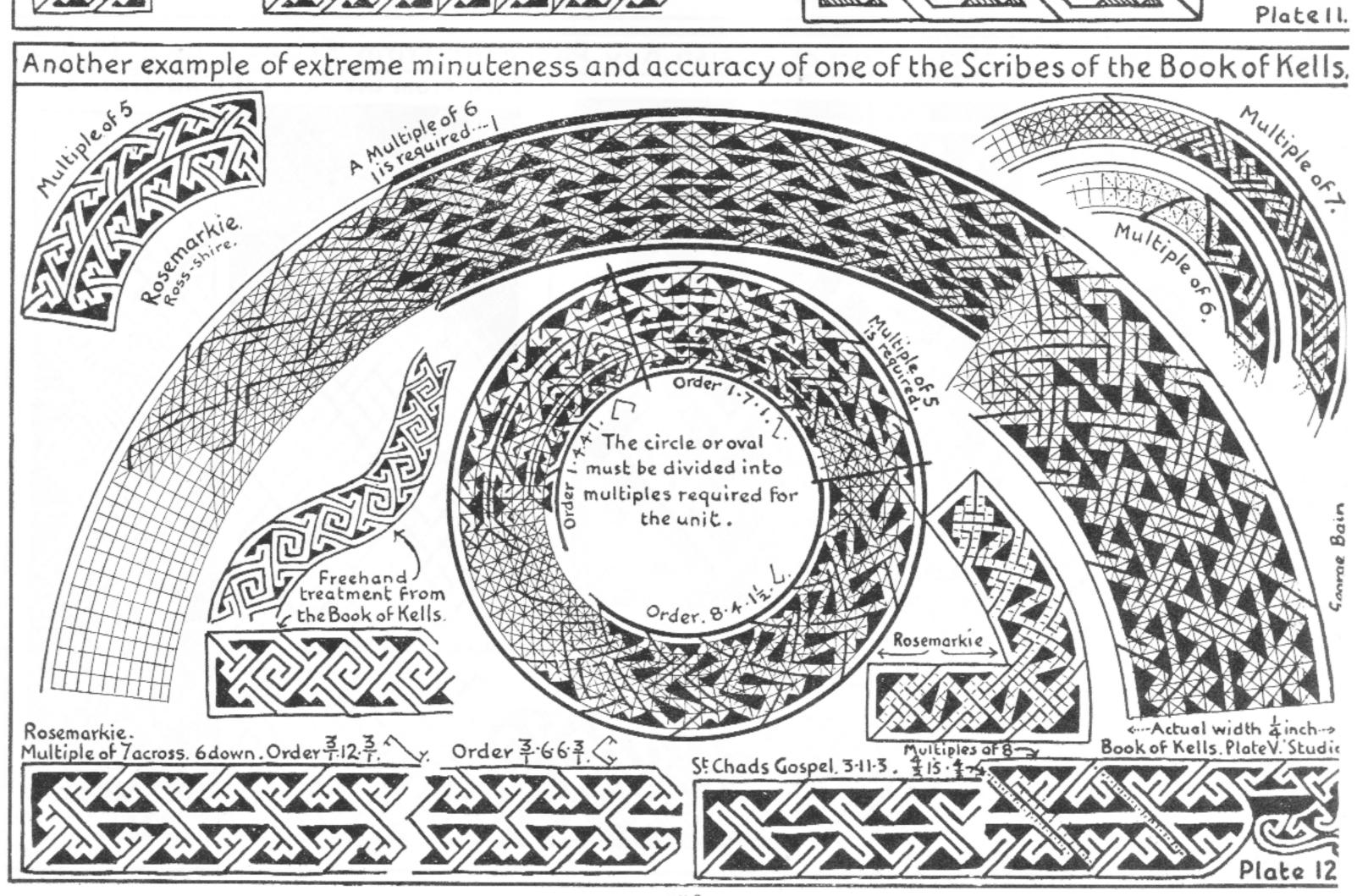


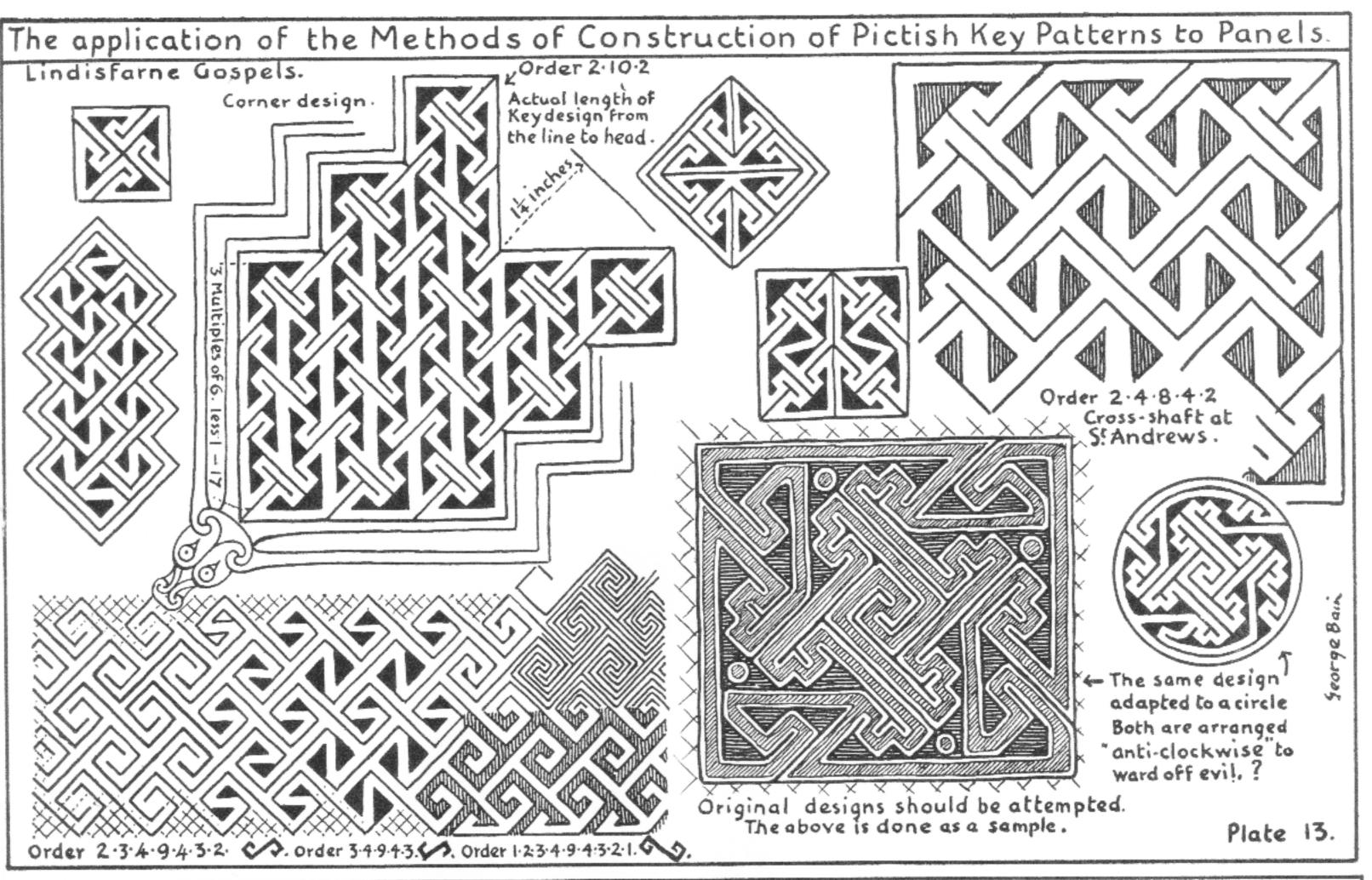


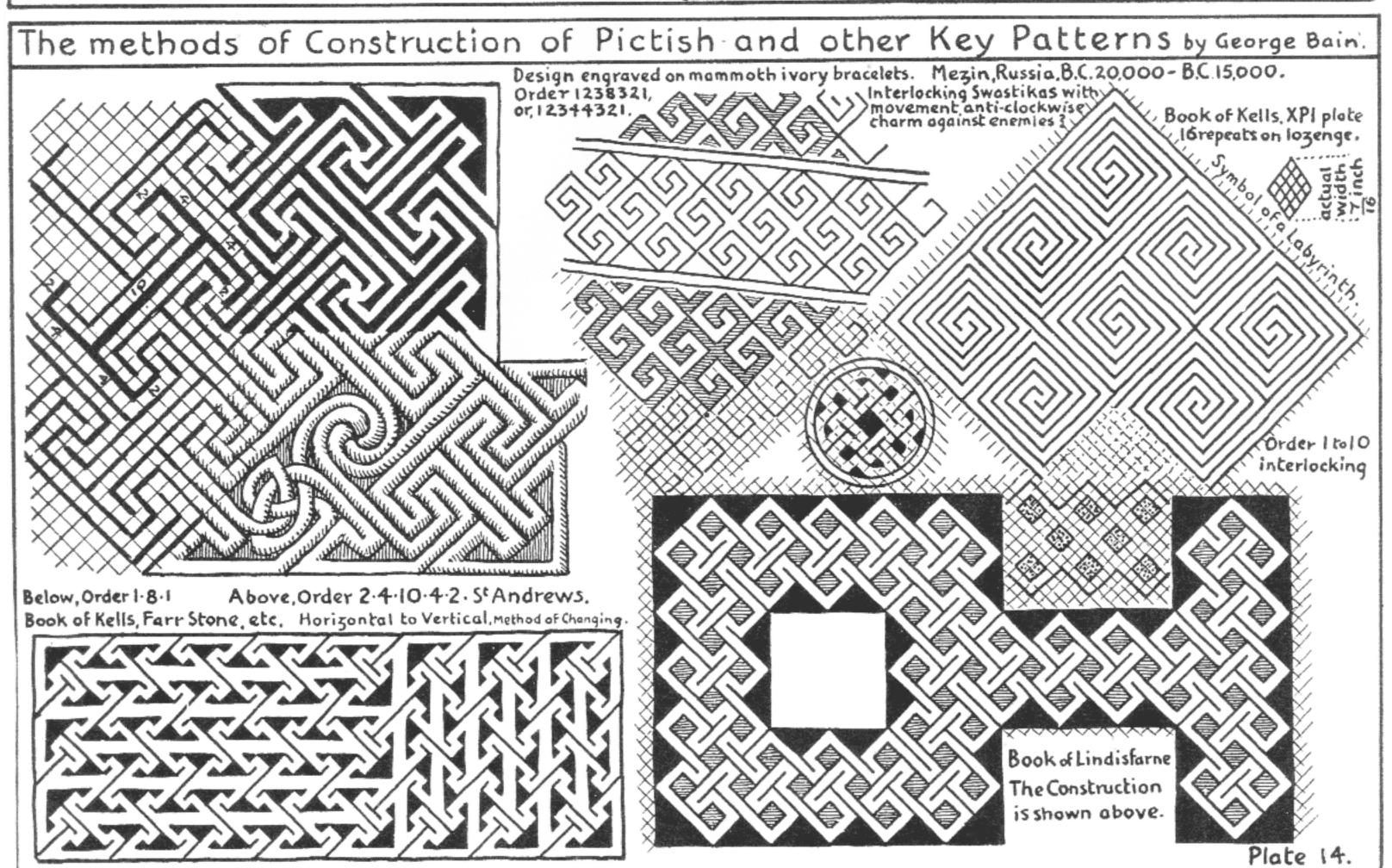
Seorge Bain

Compare with Aberlady, Haddington shire. Plate 10









. \*\* 1







\*

## Lettering

HE work of an artist-observer, who has little or no knowledge of ancient languages, may be a very useful aid to research into the written words of Celtic ornamented manuscripts. By a diligent sorting out of the varieties of treatments and the uses of letters, freed from their embellishments, much may be arranged to simplify the work of the language expert. If the artist-observer has in his possession a few examples of the alphabets of the principal ancient languages of the Eastern Mediterranean that preceded the ancient Greek and Latin alphabets, it will not be difficult to find a system of tabulating the results of his works, and if it happens to be in a known language, a language expert will do the rest. A few examples are on Plate 14.

In every publication known to the author that deals with the page of the opening words of the Gospel of St. John in the Book of Kells the language experts have given "In principio erat verbum et verbum," which is a wrong reading. Because of their knowledge from other versions of these opening words they were contented with an unfinished sentence as the theme for the decoration of a whole page of the Book of Kells. The Rev. Stanford F. H. Robinson, M.A., gave it up after the first part "In principio erat verbum," The artist-observer, with some knowledge of letter shapes, but only the vaguest boyhood Latin, is able to show that the sentence is a complete one and that the letters are "In

principio erat verbum verum." "In the beginning was the true word."

Another interesting example shown on the same plate is the unornamented inscription on the Newton Pillar Stone, Garioch, Aberdeenshire. It is in an unknown language, but most of its letters appear to be similar to Phoenician or Early Greek. It has also an inscription in Ogam letters, and by this it probably resembles the "Rosetta Stone." Unfortunately the Ogam letters are much defaced, and all photographs and drawings examined by the author show that it is extremely difficult to make a correct reading of the Ogam inscription. Shepherds appear to have noticed the inscriptions on it and to have called attention to them in 1803. There have been numerous attempts during the past century, and no two readings have any similarity.

The artist-observer who is unbiassed by a knowledge of ancient languages can sort out the letters to give an interesting and unexpected result connected with the entry of Christianity into North Britain. In the middle of the main inscription the Greek letters for "Christ," a variation of the monogram X.P.I. probably "Christis" or "Chrestus," an ancient mutilated spelling, are followed by the Greek letters for "Jesus" I.H.S.S., and then immediately by the Greek word "LOGOU," "of the word."

The circumstances of these letters appearing together supports this interpretation even in an unknown language, for such words would undergo little change on entering any language. Following these words, but with less certainty, is either "Sot-r" (Soter) Saviour or "Pat-r" (Father). Further support of the correctness of this reading is found in the Ogam inscription. Although it is much defaced, yet, if it is read from the right to the left in the Celtic Ogam manner, which in this case means commencing under the other inscription and reading downwards and bending upwards to the left to the height of the top of the other inscription, then the letters IEASOISE are followed by X on the stemline, which is unusual in Ogam. Assuming this to be the X Greek CHI, or merely the X symbol of Christ's name as in Xmas, the next letter is R or I. This circumstance added to those of the other inscription goes to strengthen the suggestion that the Ogam also refers to "Jesus Christ" whatever the language may be. I am of the opinion that when these inscriptions are fully deciphered they will be found to be dedicated to a "Servant of the word of Jesus Christ, the Son of God, the Saviour." The evidences shown may give some enlightenment regarding the Pre-Ninian Christianity of East Scotland, and particularly to "the Scots who believed in Christ." They had presbyters and ecclesiastics until Palladius was sent from Rome in 420 A.D. to be their first bishop (Bede).

The other inscription shown on Plate 14, that of the St. Vigeans Stone, Angus, is mostly in the Celtic letters used in the Book of Durrow, 4th to 6th century. The contraction of the letter A (derived from the Phoenician), as used in that book and those of Kells and Lindisfarne, appears in RA of the word VORAET. In this text-book on Celtic Letters numerous survivals of Phoenician and Early Greek letters are shown from the Books of Durrow, Kells and Lindisfarne. The appearance of Greek letters on this and on other Celtic inscribed and ornamented stones is not unusual. The first two lines are

purely Celtic letters of 4th to 6th century "DROSTEN: IPE VORAET," and the author has given what he can decipher from it on Plate 14.

The reason of the mystical use of the fish to symbolise Christianity is that the first letters of the words "Jesus Christ, Son of God, Saviour" in the Greek language are the letters of the Greek word for a "Fish." The salmon (or the sturgeon) in the Celtic pagan periods is the symbol of all knowledge past and future. The "Bracket" symbol, also shown on Plate 14, was used by the Celtic scribe in the same way that a modern letter-writer, when cramped for space, adds a bracket in the available space above the line and completes the sentence there. The scribe appears to have roughly drafted out his page arrangement by making space allowances for the lengths of the sentences. He then designed and completed the initial letters on the left of the page, and when he failed to complete the sentence in the allotted line he placed the bracket symbol after the full stop of the sentence above, preceded it by the cross symbol placed over the full stop and added the remainder of the sentence, usually commencing at part of a word. This is to be seen on Plate III of the Studio publication of some of the best pages of the Book of Kells. In one of these examples an excellent decorative drawing of the fighting dog of the ancient Britons is placed between the cross symbol and the bracket symbol. The Irish authorities name this bracket the "Head under the wing" or "Turn under the path" symbol. It seems to have originated in the Altaic symbol "Pak," which signifies "Above," "the Firmament," "Supreme," etc. When placed over the symbol of a "King" it means "King of Kings" in Hittite cuneform letters. It is also similar in outline to an old form of the Greek B.

Many of the Celtic letters are derived direct from the Phoenician and Early Greek alphabets and are to be found by the side of Roman letters in the Books of Durrow, Kells and Lindisfarne. The Phoenician or Egyptian M is used when it is the last letter in a line if the space is scanty. A good example of this is on the page of St. Luke's Gospel, Chapter I, Book of Durrow, with the large letters QUONIAM. The same use is made of the Phoenician N. The Greek D Delta and the Greek small d are the basic forms of the Celtic D. The Celtic capital A and its Celtic contraction are derived from the Phoenician A. The Greek O, small letter, omega, which resembles the W in script, is seen on the page of the opening words of the Gospel of St. Luke, QUONIAM, Plate XIV, Studio Book of Kells. The gradation from

the larger decorated capital letters on the left of the page to the small script on the right is rarely abrupt. The second letter, which is smaller, usually has some ornamentation. The third letter is still smaller and with less decoration, and then the ordinary script follows. In the Celtic languages of Britain and Ireland K and W are not used. The author has added them in forms to be in keeping with the others. K does not appear in Anglo-Saxon letter until about the 12th century. Selected letters from the works of the various scribes of the Book of Kells to form a complete alphabet are shown on Plate 1. They will justify to the Celtic scribes a prominent place in the front rank of lettering artists of any period or nation. It is with great misgivings that the author tampers with such beauty to attempt to give a suggested modification for modern uses on the same plate. differs mainly in the G and Y.

No other treatment can compete with the Celtic G of the 4th to 6th century for its sheer beauty of form, and the suggested modernising of it only makes it more readable on first sight. With such an alphabet to be obtained from the Book of Kells, it is a wonder that the enthusiasts of Eire searched for the grotesque in their endeavour to revive this Celtic culture.

Evidences that the Phoenician and other Eastern cultures influenced British cultures many centuries before the invasions by the Romans are to be found in every form of Early British art, and it is not surprising to find similar evidences in the Celtic ornamented stones and the Celtic manuscripts of the Early Christian period. The author is indebted to his friend, Henry I. Cunningham, M.A., Exhibitioner of Christ Church, Oxford, for his part as ancient language expert to his artist-observer activities, and he leaves it to the readers to assess the results.

A book in Celtic script type, printed by Ebhlin Everingham in London 1711, came into the author's possession recently. In it are a few letters and contractions of letters hitherto unknown to him. Plate 15 shows its contents; capitals, smalls, contractions, numbers, etc. A reproduction of one of its pages, with some of its capitals, all of the smalls and most of the contractions, shows the beauty of such Celtic letters when put to their real uses on the printed page. Sentences show no gaps, and although the letters and the spaces between words are of varying widths, yet the pattern produced is a flat tone with an interesting effect even to the uninitiated. The first capital A, which is used specially to commence paragraphs, is similar to the German 16th century capital A. The second

#### CELTIC ART

capital A which is derived from the early Celtic MSS., is used to commence sentences. The capital M partly resembles the first capital A and may be derived from the German 16th century M which it partly resembles. Comparisons with the Phoenician A show its affinity to parts of the Celtic contractions for Air, ea and ao. The contraction for UI is probably the Greek capital upsilon u and i. The seven-like symbol used as a contraction for "agus" or "and" has a resemblance to the Greek Tau, middle T. The author does not know why it should be selected to act as an ampersand. There is probably some other simple explanation that he is unable to give.

Professor MacAlister in his "Secret Languages of Ireland" says "Thus it comes about that these letters are provided with vowel or dipthong values in the M.S. tradition and their true but unnecessary consonant values are forgotten".

He also says, "after Caesar's time the Druids abandoned the Greek for the dominant Roman letters. All bilingual Ogham inscriptions are accompanied by Roman, never by Greek letters and no trace suggesting the continuance of Greek letters appears to have survived." There are examples on the various plates of Celtic letters in this book, from Celtic MSS. written in Latin and on the Newton Stone, in Greek and Ogham, plate 14, confuting Professor MacAlister's last statement.

Comparisons of Celtic letters, 4th to 6th Century will show that A, D, M, N, etc. are derived from Phoenician and Early Greek. One M form is from Egyptian. The Greek O, omega is used on the page of the opening word "Quoniam" St. Luke's Gospel, Book of Kells. The scribe has hidden it from vulgar prying eyes, "Quo" fills more than half of the page, and "NIAM" forms the decorative structure that shows the Samaritan woman offering Christ water from a goblet, as described on page 102.

The Hebrew letter VAU, which resembles the number SEVEN, is sometimes used in Hebrew for AND. This is probably the reason for its use in the later Irish Gaelic religious MSS.







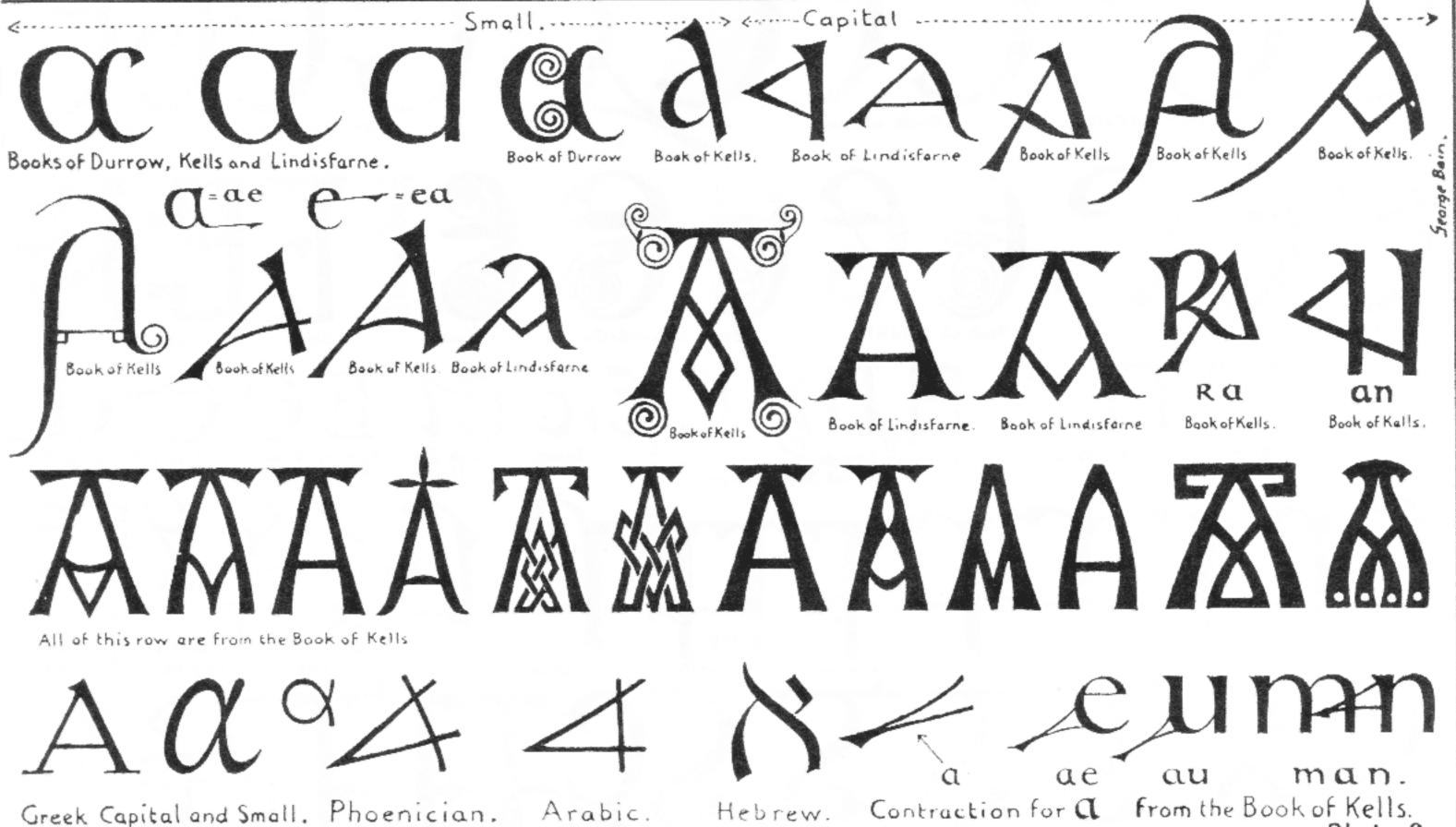
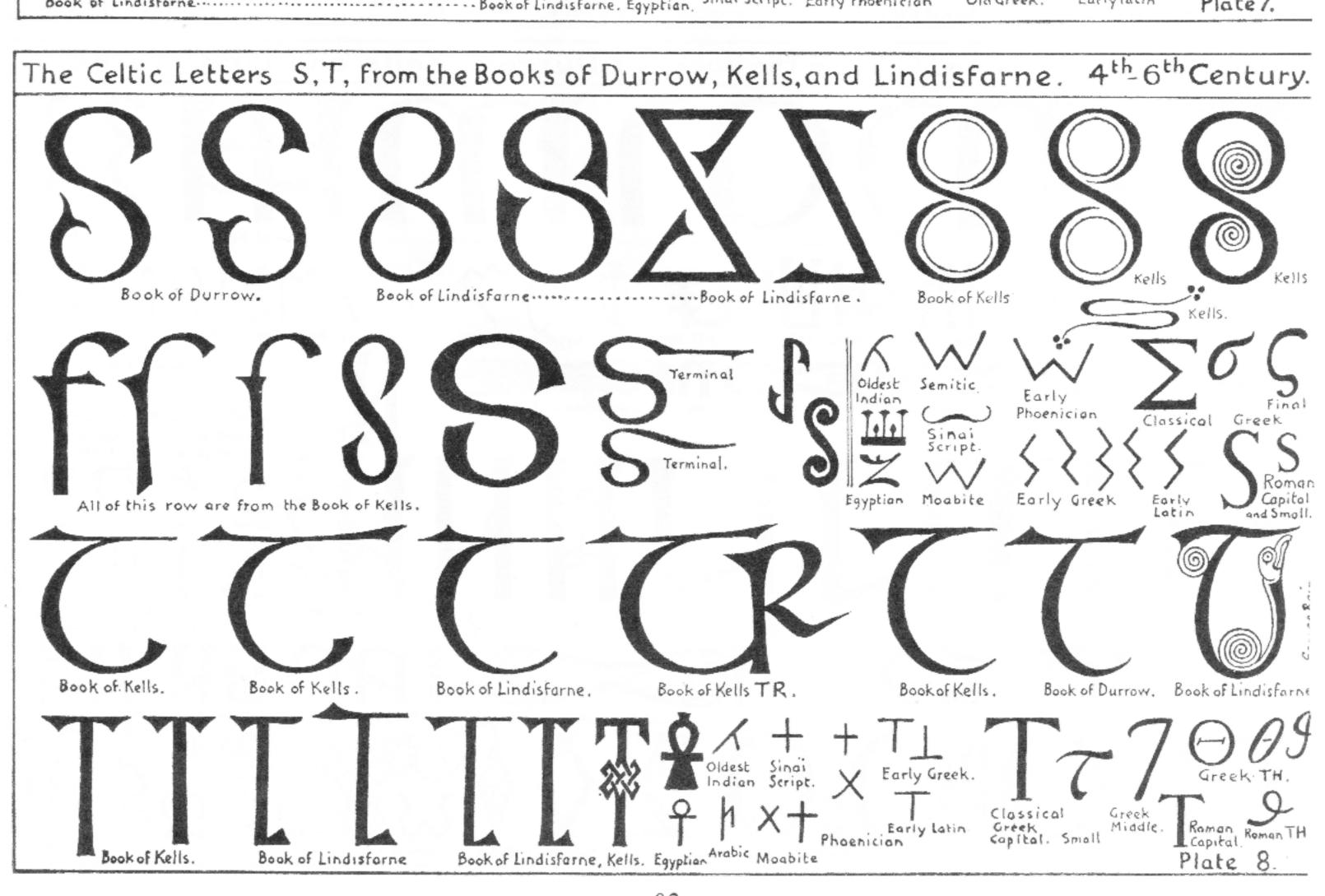


Plate 2.

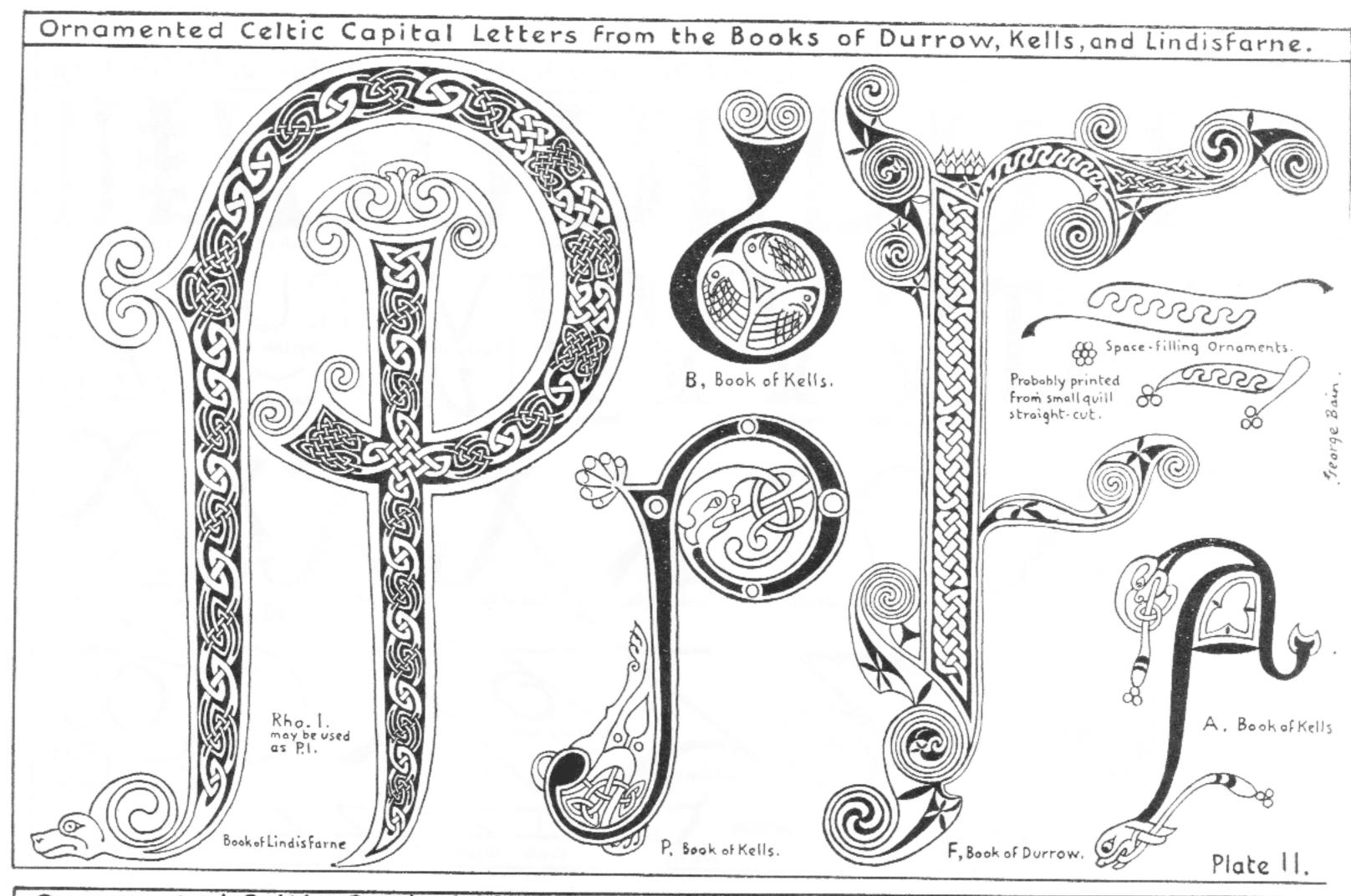


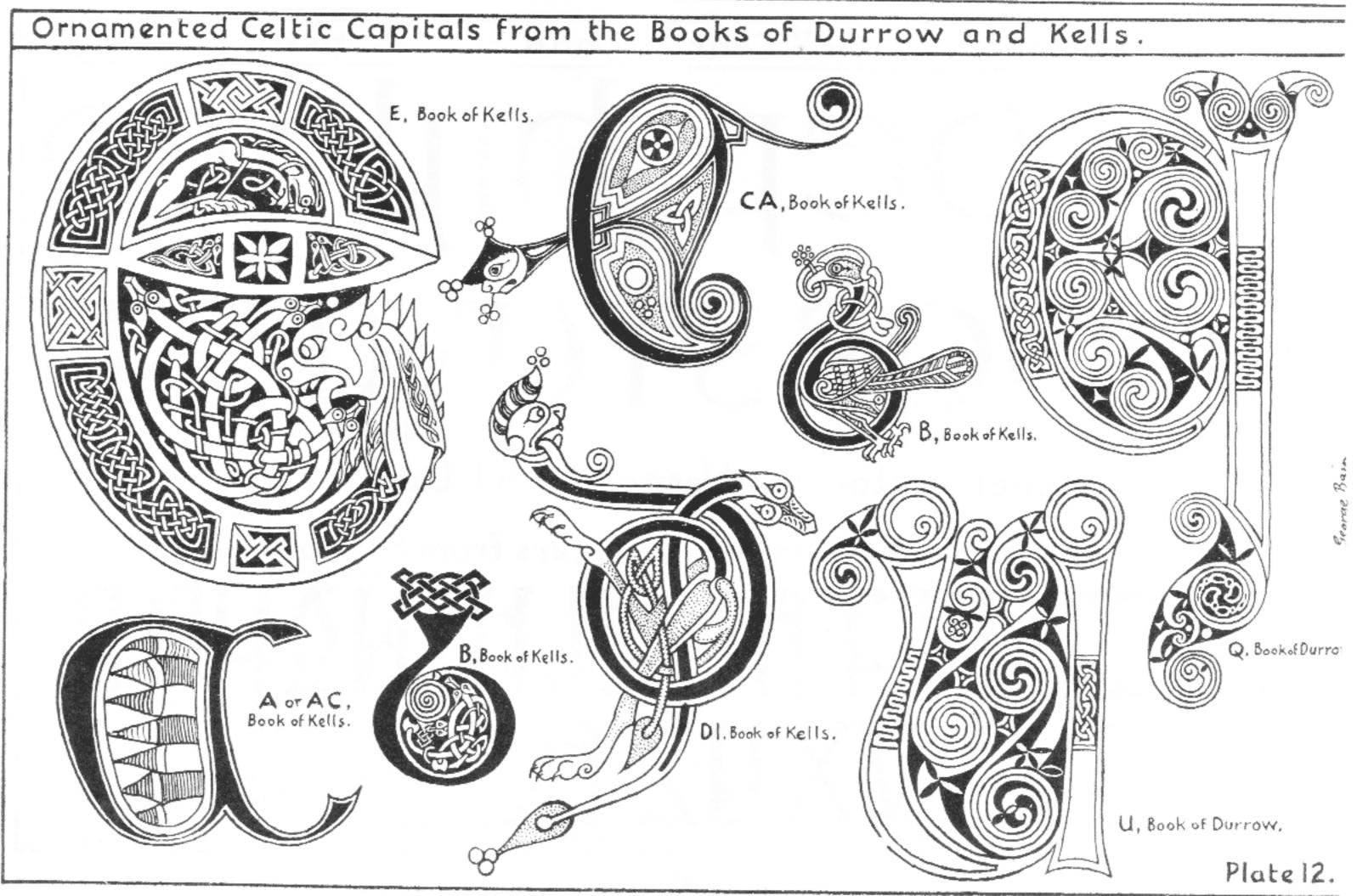


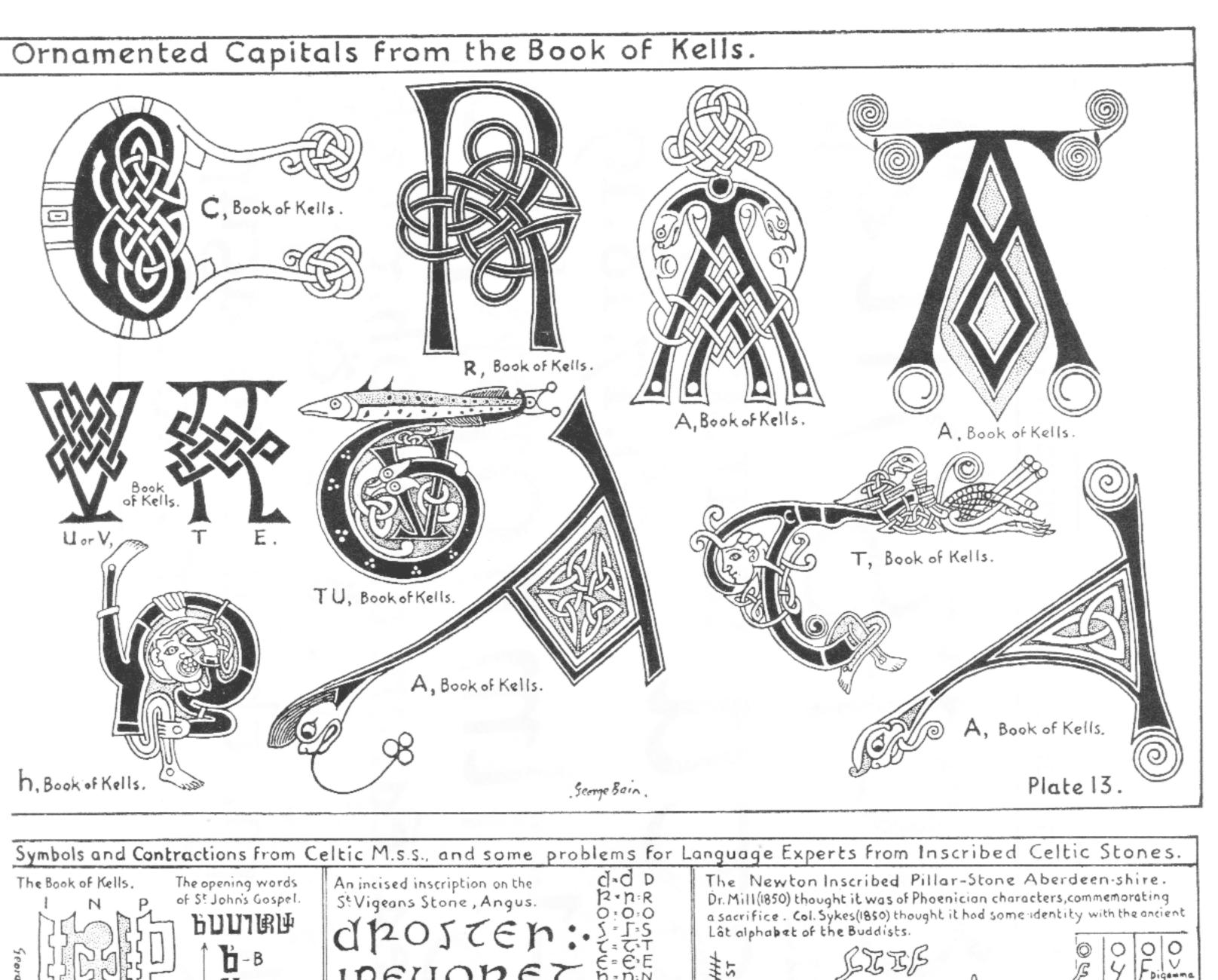


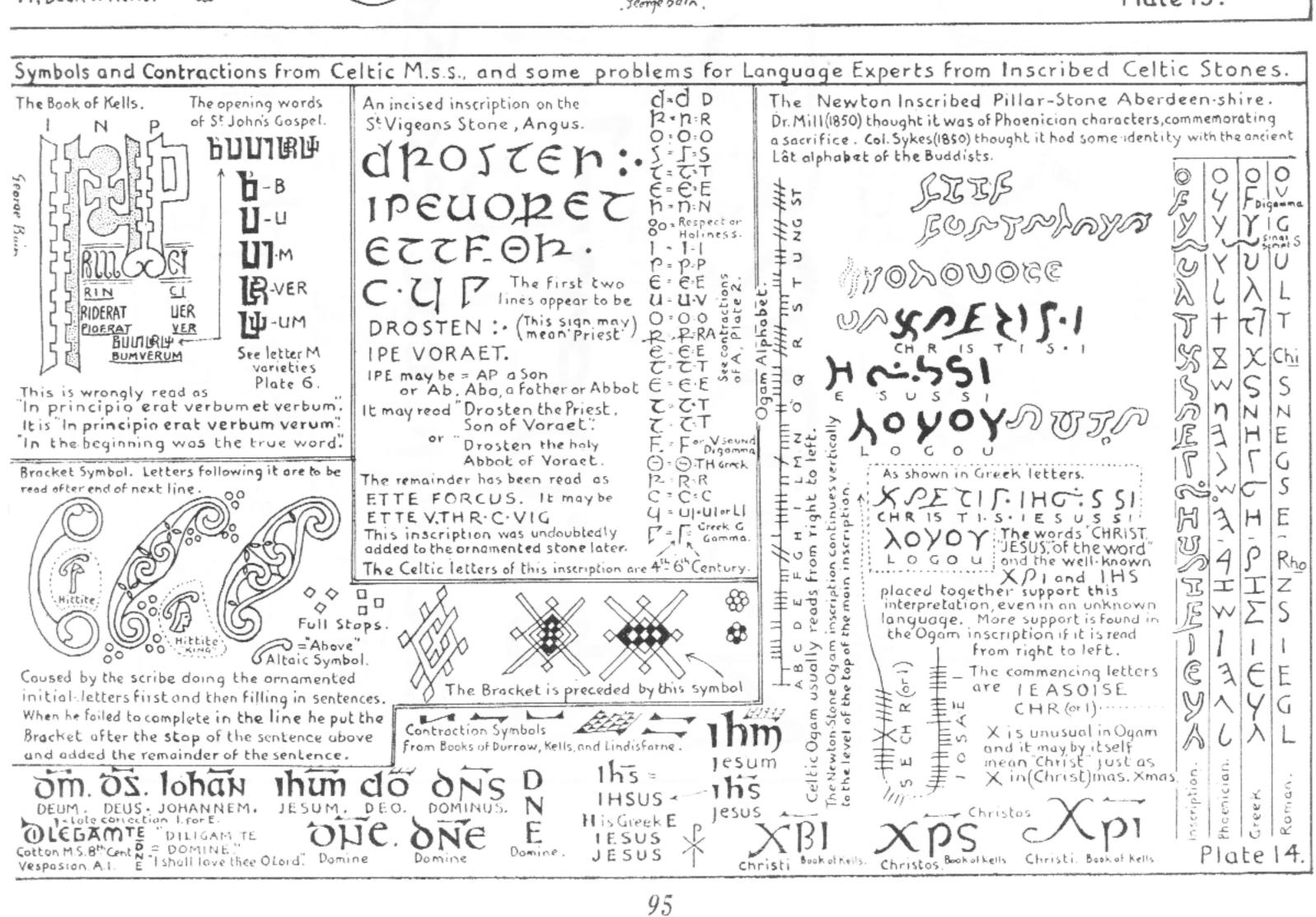












### ( 101 )

agur man rin cionur théabram a chun a

gceill.

Ir rion to, an meio aga bril a zenoioze Flónglanca le cheidemh a Mióra Chiord, agur α ποεξόμουξα cum umlugas δαιτέπτα δε, 30 bréadno an uaine let amané bez orázail do Bloin an traogail oile, nemblar bez, no ront raigneige an na gubailció nemoa úd, le beloperdir tugim do tabgt है a nádrin, agur ain a nombencuy: Ur ir neite iad nac beloun aon nomne a brior do beit dize (30 hiomlán) ar an të motritior iad: यहपा ni mó tá an a zeumuy a naithir, ná a otuanarcáil do tabat do baoine oile; man do bein nrom Dedan da aine, man a naision, as that & Chniord leir na baoine cheiolog 100; an ci ba btugabain znáo, biób nac bracabain é, an a bril Tib a noir as cheidem, se nac lein dib e (7 ar) a noeantaoi zainogcar le luatzaine sófairneir zlopman, I De. I 8. Tá luatzáine ainmeransa, asur noslonman onna the na zeneidem a zeniórd, azur beznac daonádzik leite yioò a belaiter de, an yon go bent a Sceim if ifle; af ni feidin i to tot paichil le bealmas: Sio gan reg daib rein le rionznár zo břil vě ionta fein, ni ředono a foillriuda ain mod 30 bredrad duine oile a trisrin man an zcedona oin ni peadan connec an ni motriger orne oile do motugad, af an te motrigior é, zich zo nognad re ingin dáib; azur ni ra lug zo món na róibh eacrainla uo a tá ór cion zach nle béalpaich ain bich.

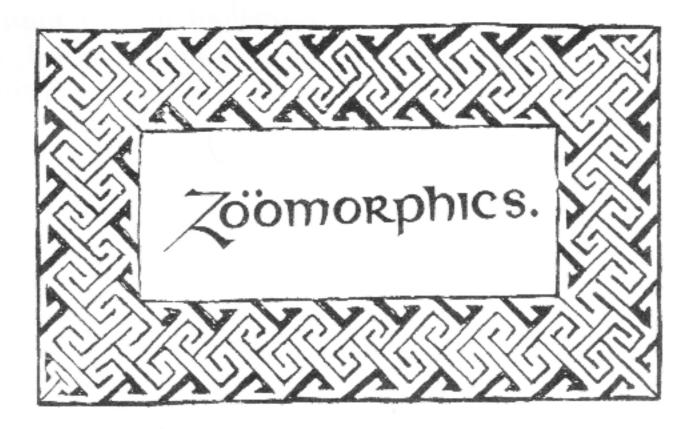
h 3

Sland

A page of Gaelic (Irish) type, printed in London 1711.









In many publications this is erroneously described as "a man playing a harp."
It is "a man, a beast, a bird and perhaps a reptile."

# Zoomorphics

OOMORPHIC ornaments are those based upon the forms of animals, birds and reptiles. Anthropomorphic ornaments are those based upon the forms of the human body. They make an early appearance in the Art of Bronze-age Britain and Ireland, and in the Bronze-age Gaulish, La Tene, and other European forms of Celtic Art. They are usually in conjunction with spiral ornaments, and the leg-joints and rib-forms of the animals in ornamental rendering have spiral terminal treatments. This peculiar manner of expressing the forms and movements of animals may be seen in the metal work of the 5000 B.C. to 3000 B.C. period of culture of the City of Ur. What are probably the representations of the sacred animals of the various families or tribes of North Britain are carved on the otherwise unornamented stones of Prehistoric Scotland. These depict in a manner that is intensely realistic, and of great artistry, a result that cannot be obtained by the imitation of Nature.

In this way the Burghead Bulls express the great strength and character of these animals and surpass in the expression of truth what realism of the purely imitative kind could achieve. The Boar, the Wolf, the Stag, the Hind, the Horse, the Goose, the Eagle, the fish and the reptile stones are all "picked" out with great skill in the manner of the incised stone carvings of Egypt and Assyria. Examples of the semi-realistic treatment of animals and mythical animals of Celtic Britain and Ireland, including the winged Lion and the winged Bull from the Book of Kells, containing much of the character of Assyrian Art, are shown on Plate 10. Every form and manner of treatment of the Scribes' works in the Book of Kells show that the origins are to be found in the arts of the carver, the metal worker, and the embroiderer. No matter how small and loaded with details the Scribe made his work, even if a magnifying glass is required to see it, then the smallest details of forms and surfaces will be found to have been thoroughly worked out as if to meet the demands of the carver or worker in three dimensions.

Artistic abandon that is not interested in the designing of every shape of the background with the same importance as the forms of the motif will not be found in the Book of Kells.

Lacertine or reptile ornaments, as shown on Plates 6 and 7, are numerous in the Books of Durrow, Kells, Lindisfarne, and St. Chad's.

Their beginnings are certainly in Pagan serpent worship. In the prehistoric Giant's Tower at Gozo, Malta, the only representation of any living thing is a bas-relief of a serpent in the vicinity of the altar, which is also decorated with spirals and geometric figures in the manner of Pictish Art, neatly and sharply cut in the stone. Numerous stones each bearing an incised serpent and sometimes other symbols are among the remains of Prehistoric Scotland.

The suggestion arises that these are the serpents that St. Patrick banished from Ireland, but, as he was educated in his religious and other cultures by the priests of the Southern Pictish Christian Church in Strath Clyde before he returned early in the 5th century to the land of his birth and early childhood, he did not banish them from the Manuscript Art, where they persisted for a few centuries after his time.

Abstract representations of human male figures with interlacing limbs, bodies, hair, top knots and beards are used to decorate the sacred pages of the Gospels of the Book of Kells. In the same book there are pairs of birds, animals, and groups of pairs of reptiles, comparable in some respects with those of Assyrian, Persian, Chinese, and Chinese-Turkestan Arts. Pairs of birds with interlaced or entwined necks are found in modern native art in Ceylon.

Groups of beard-pullers occur on Celtic Stones and in the Book of Kells. There are two pairs of beard-pullers with checked trousers or painted checks on their legs in a small panel on the right of the Christ monogram page of that book, see Plate 14. On another page the robed priests calmly survey the pairs of beard-pullers beneath them. As they descend in the panel the lowest pairs are topsy-turvy and are coloured in violet and dark green, a suggestion of the underworld more than mere taste in colour decoration. Perhaps beard-pullers are used as the symbol of the marketing or bartering of the Early British business men, the equivalent of those that Christ cleared out of the Temple. The problem of the purpose of such figures in the pages of the Gospels is awaiting serious investigators. It is more than a forerunner of the leg-puller. There are numerous examples of humour in Gospels of the Book of Kells, including a little fellow in tartan "cocking a snoot."

The author has reserved for an advanced book numerous examples of hitherto unnoticed or wrongly interpreted groups. One of the first

mentioned is built around the letters NIAM (see page 120). In it are depicted two figures with halos, ascending to heaven, twelve robed figures, the Apostles, two figures undergoing mental tortures for wickedness (all tortures are mental ones, that is, the head of the wicked sufferer is in the jaws of the beast). A woman (Samaritan) offering a goblet of water to a seated figure (Christ), who holds in His own hand a cup or beaker with the water of everlasting life. A figure (faith) reclines at Christ's feet and holds Christ's left leg. Nearby a young man lies dead. This excellently designed group has never been commented upon by any expert. An example of wrongful interpretation by experts of Celtic Art of the past century is to be found in many works on the subject. It has persisted for nearly a century, and it is even repeated in the "Studio" publication of some of the finest pages of the Book of Kells edited by Sir Edward Sullivan. Referring to the opening words of St. John's Gospel, the letters CI of principio are said to (see page 115) represent a "man playing a harp." This is an example of careless or casual looking and of the encouragement of the imagination. The Book of Kells is generally classed as Irish in origin; so is the harp. Thus by a casual glance "a man playing a harp" is born. Careful looking and the absence of imagination reveal a man, a beast, a bird, and perhaps a reptile-and nothing more. The probable meaning of this group is the "created forms of life on land." The preceding letters RIN are used to display the Celtic Tree of Life (see page 125), which emerges from a pot or beaker and has leaves and fruits that resemble mistletoe more than any other plant form. It branches from the main stem to form cornucopiae from which other branches with leaves and fruits emerge. Two birds pick the fruit. The letters RIN are formed into zoomorphic dog-like animals with top-knots, tails, tongues, forelegs, hindlegs, and toes with claws. This Celtic rendering of the Tree of Life, which always emerges from a pot or beaker, is the only plant form to be found in the Book of Kells, and not more than ten times. Two of these are beautiful examples, with tropical birds that have hitherto been unnoticed by experts. There are a number of examples of the Celtic Tree of Life on the Scottish Pictish Stones, including the Nigg and Hilton of Cadboll Stones.

There are also on the same page two interesting panels of beard-pullers with embroidered garments in the manner of Eastern Europe or Asia Minor. These and other interesting discoveries are reserved for an advanced work. On the centre of the Greek letter X of the Christ

monogram page a multiple of the CI symbol may be seen. There are four hairy males with ribbon-like bodies, arms, legs, feet, and top-knots, four reptiles, four beasts, and twelve birds all with top-knots, etc. See Plate 12. Also on the Christ monogram page a complete list of life on land, in air, and in water is to be found—man, beast, bird, reptile, fish, insect and plant. All Celtic zoomorphic and anthropomorphic designs are logically completed and conform to the laws of Nature, no matter how the artist may have interlaced and contorted his motif. However crazy the result may appear by the rules of modern art, limbs and bodies, though elongated, and heads, legs, arms, tails, wings, and top-knots will be in relation to their positions in Nature.

The golden rule in the study of the ornaments of the Book of Kells and other Celtic MSS. is "beware of what you think it looks like." A scrutiny in minute portions may enable the student to draw each portion large, with no consideration of what they may portray. When these are put together they may make sense. Unless reason and imagination are divorced from observation, the results may be of the wrong kind already shown. There are a few examples of zoomorphic and other ornaments carved very minutely on the bones of sheep and deer. These were found in a crannog in Ireland and are illustrated in the preface by Dr. Stuart in the "Sculptured Stones of Scotland."

These are probably the models made by a jeweller for making moulds for casting metal ornamented panels for rivetting. A "squeeze" in a moist suitable clay would make such a mould and could be repeated as often as required.

A common device of which there are many examples in the Book of Kells and a few on the Scottish Pictish Cross slab-stones is a man and a bird or a man with a bird in each hand. On the page of the eight circled Cross of the Book of Kells there is a panel composed of four men and eight birds.

The Scottish ornamented Cross slab-stone of Rossie Priory has two small panels, one on each side of the space formed by the Cross and the Halo. In one there is a man with a goose in each hand. The other contains a winged and armless figure with a skirt-like garment covering the knees. In the British Museum there is a Minoan ivory plaque showing the Boeotian Goddess Artemis with a water-bird resembling a goose in each hand. She is winged and wears a skirt-like garment.

The following references show that in the Gaelic period of Scotland the zoomorphic art was in use. In Dr. Alexander Carmichael's collected Barra version in Gaelic of the Pre-

### CELTIC ART

Christian "Tale of Deirdire" Fillan Fionn is described thus, "and the young hero, fresh-noble, fresh-manly, fresh-glorious with his lovely brown locks, went out girded in his war weapons of hard battle, that were polished, gleaming, glittering, brilliant, flushing, on which were the many figures of beasts, birds and creeping things (reptiles)." The use of "the" signifies that it was a customary form of ornamentation. A description of the arming of John, the last Lord of the Isles, in the 15th century mentions "an encircling belt with good clasps made of bronze with figures of 'flying birds' on the borders. An artist exercised his best skill in making that excellent girdle." There are numerous references to the skilled work of the Celtic artist craftsmen in jewellery, hammered metal work, repousee, casting, engraving and enamelling, in sculpture of ivory, bone, wood and stone, and to embroideries in Gaelic Pagan and Early Christian literature. The absence of any references to the spiral, key and interlacing ornaments peculiar to Celtic Art suggests that many of the Celtic motifs of Scotland and Ireland are pre-Gaelic. Neither are there any references to these in the writings of Bede, Adamnan, and other adherents of the Roman Church of Augustine.

The rare appearance of female figures on the Scottish East Coast ornamented stones, and their complete absence in the Anthropomorphic Art of the Celtic MSS. is worth remarking on,

and the reason may yet be found.

Representations of the Virgin Mary begin with the entry of the Roman Church of Augustine to England and to Ireland, and they are not found in the Pictish areas of Scotland. A great mass of valuable manuscripts was destroyed by the Augustine Church by the orders of Pope Gregory the Great. The great and matured skill shown in every form of the art contained in the few surviving manuscripts

would be impossible without many earlier books that gradually developed the prototype of Celtic Sacred Books. The prototype of the forms of the ornamentations and the peculiar methods of construction required to produce them is that of the ornamented Cross slab-stones of Pictish East Scotland. This great art was a religious one. Throughout the whole of the zoomorphic and anthropomorphic and the semi-realism of Celtic Art of the MSS. and of the Pictish Stones of Scotland there are no obscene carvings of any kind. This is not so in Roman and other Classical Arts. The study of the methods of construction of Celtic ornaments will shed a new light that will correct many wrongful ideas regarding the Celtic Race in Britain and Ireland. Words are often liars, and the older they are the more powerful and the more difficult to disprove. The evidence obtained by this new method of research cannot lie.

With such evidence already gained, the order of the periods of the so-called Irish manuscripts are:

The Book of Durrow-Early 5th to Early

6th Century.

The Book of Kells—Middle 6th to Early 7th Century.

The Book of Lindisfarne—Late 7th Century.
The Book of St. Chads—Late 7th to 8th
Century.

The Book of MacRegol—Not later than 8th Century.

In same manner as Durrow and Kells, but by inferior artists.

The Book of MacDurnan—9th to 10th Century.

By this method of research the author hopes to include in an advanced work a classification of the Great Masters, Masters, assistants, and pupils who built up the world's greatest Celtic Art treasure—the Book of Kells.



The Celtic Version of The Wolf shall also dwell with the Lamber. Isaiah, Chapil, 6-9. Chap. 65-25.

high Cross of Muredach, Monasterdoice,
Ireland.

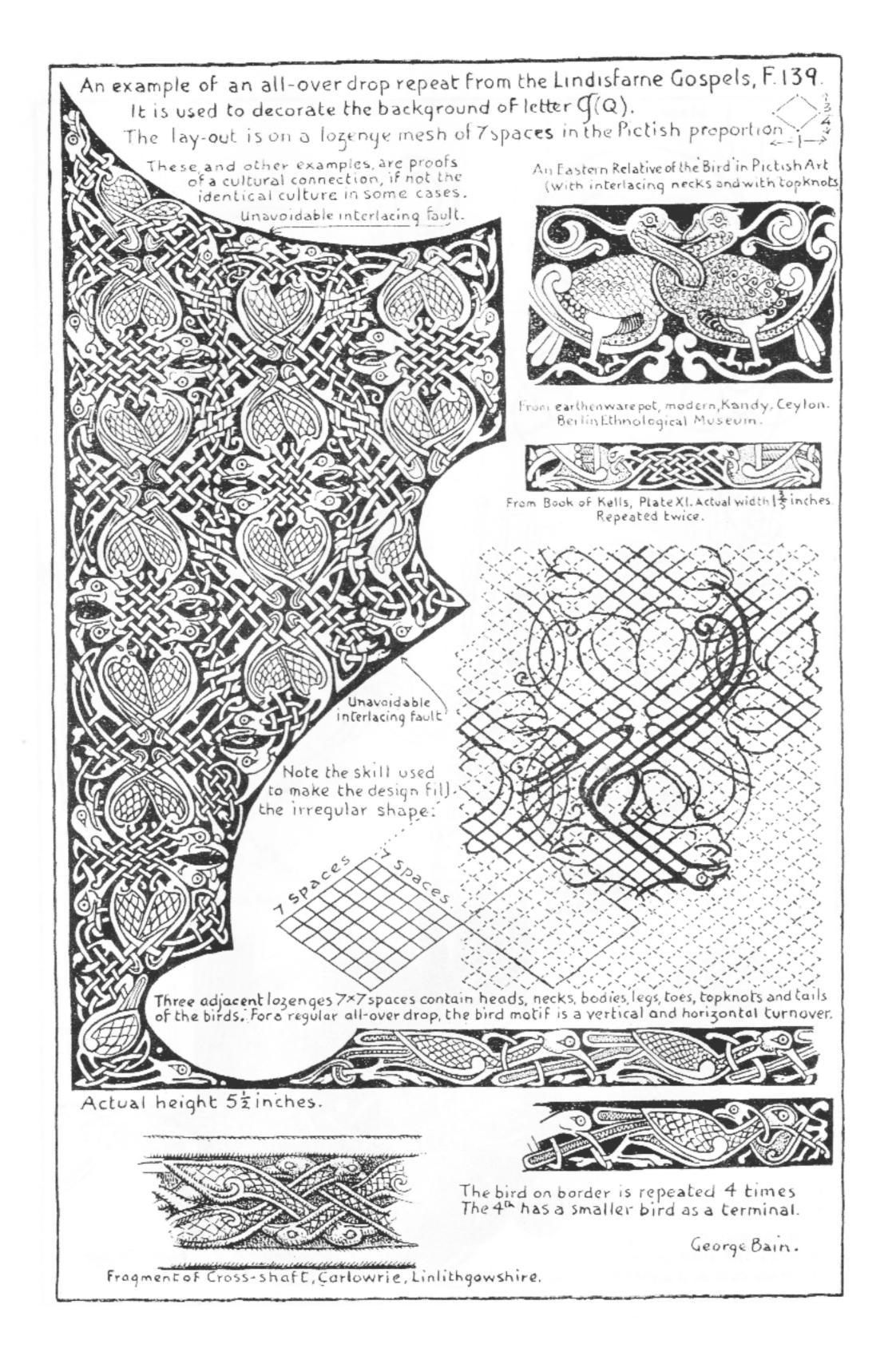


Plate Q

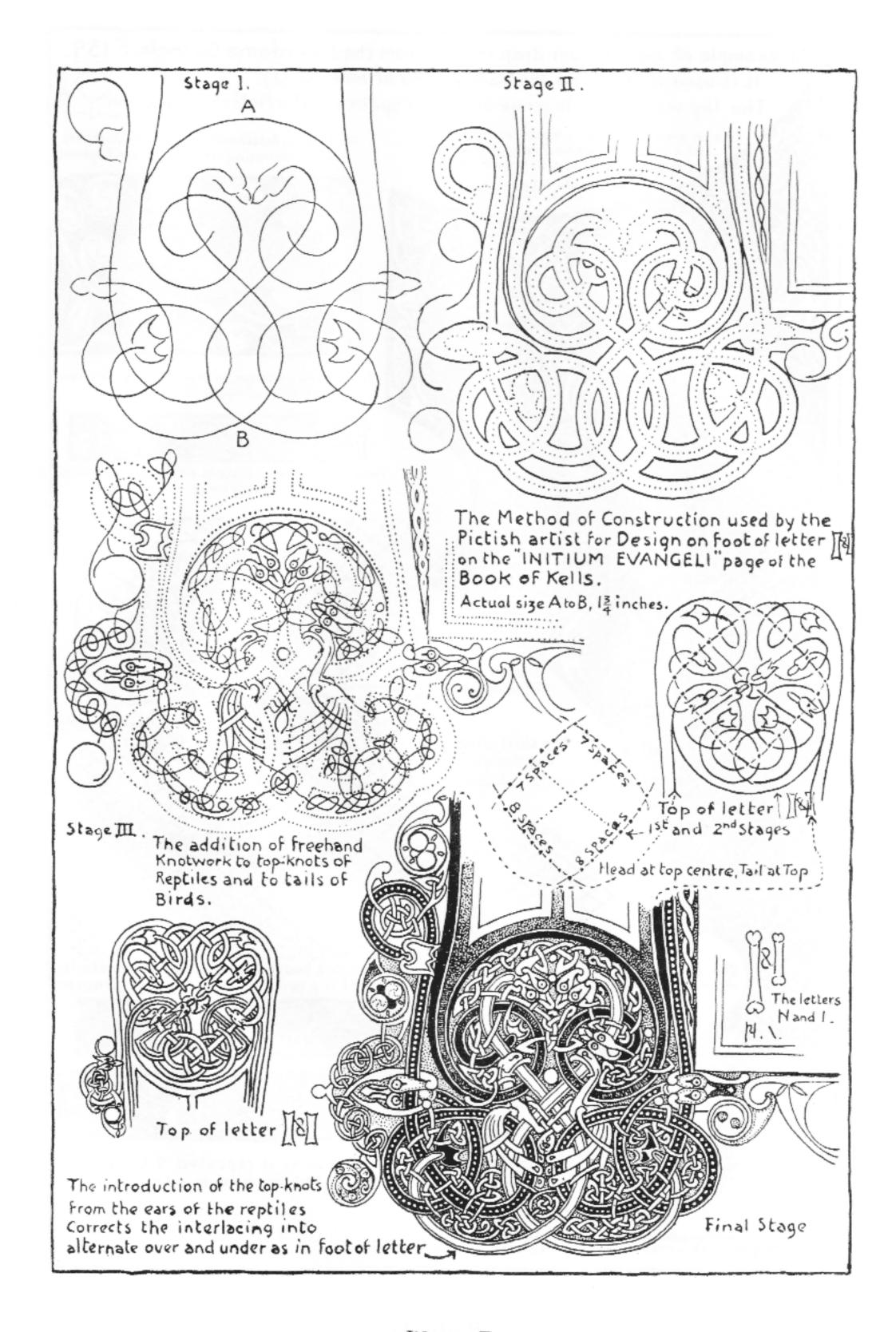
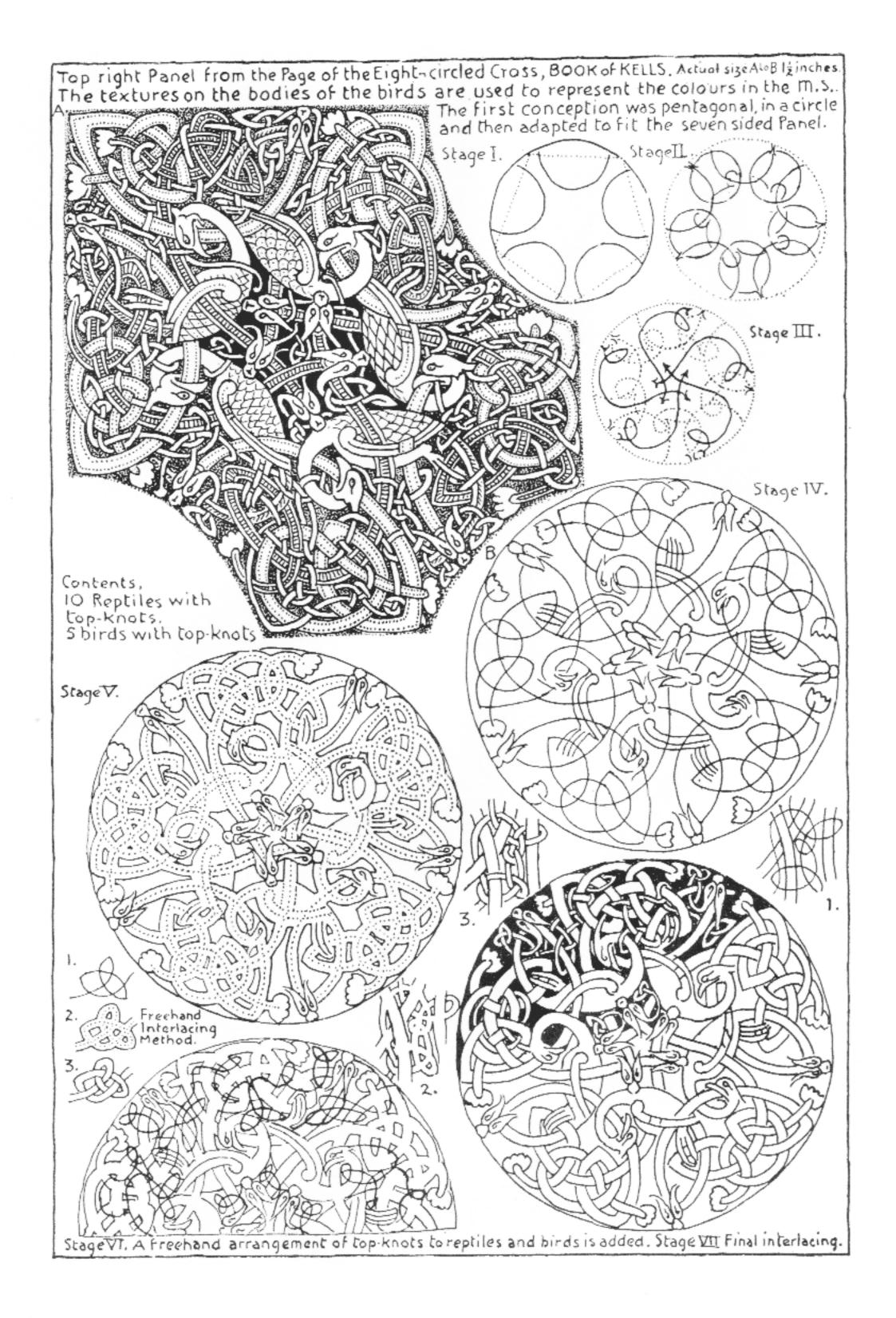
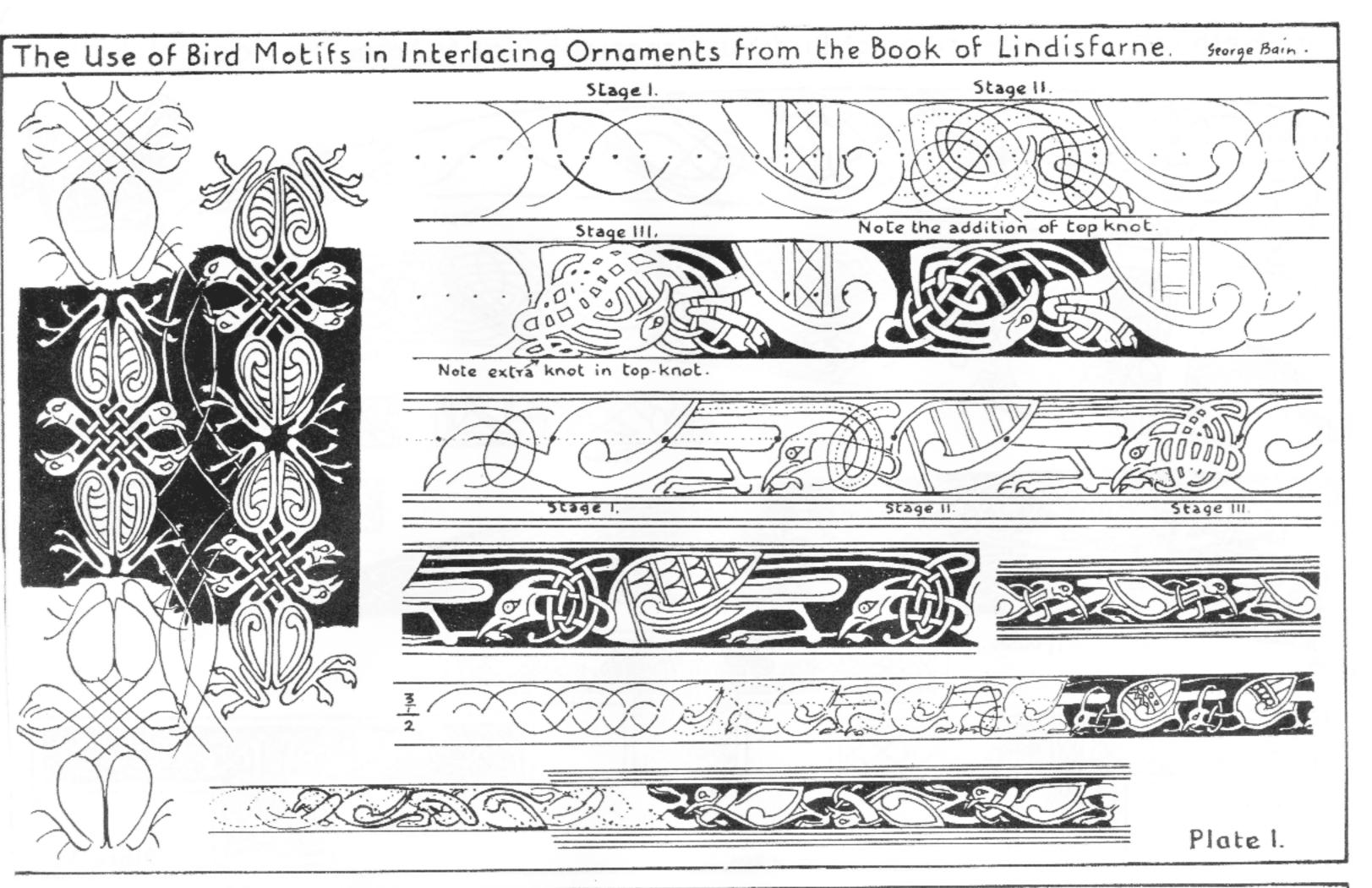


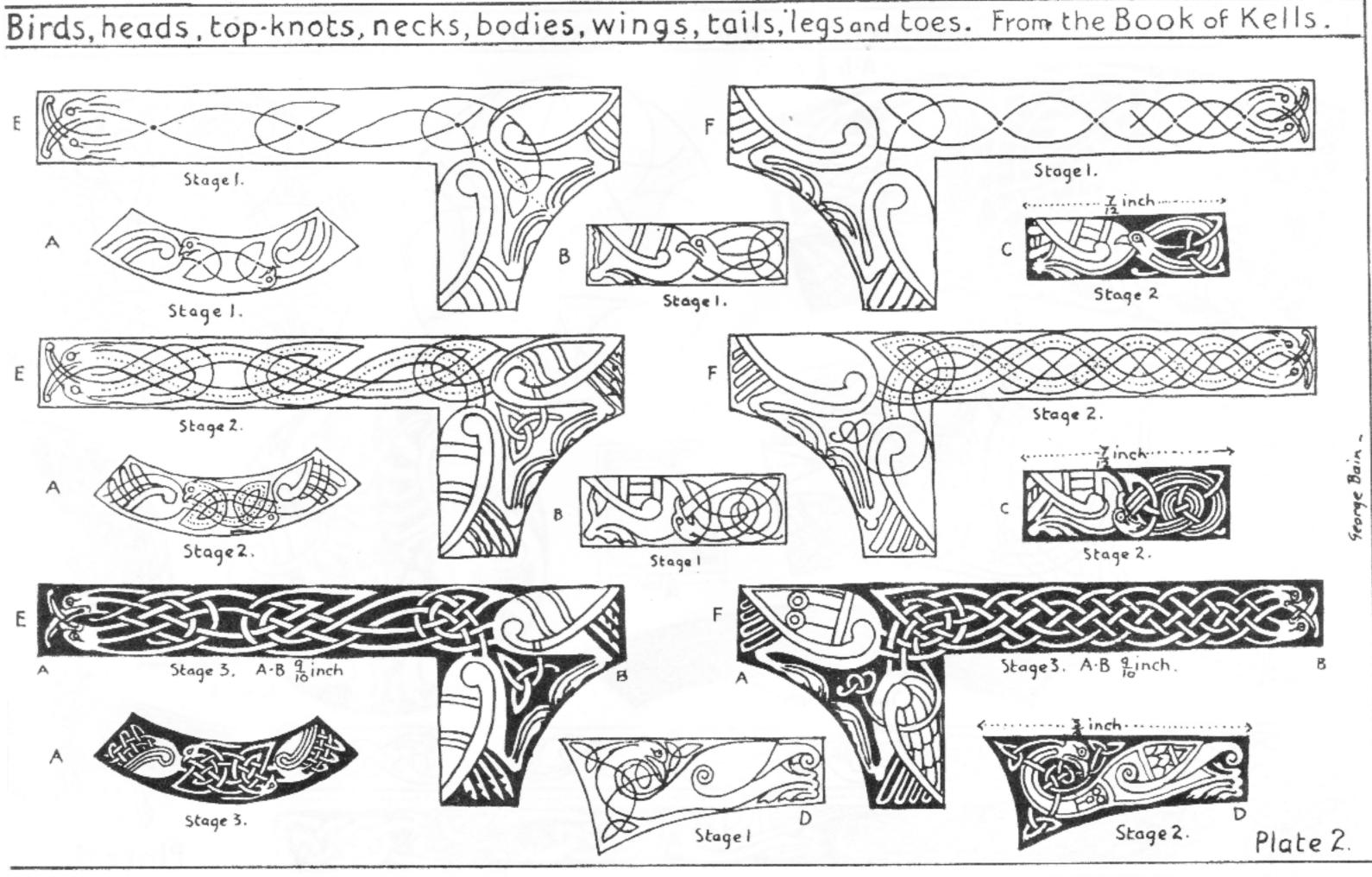
Plate R

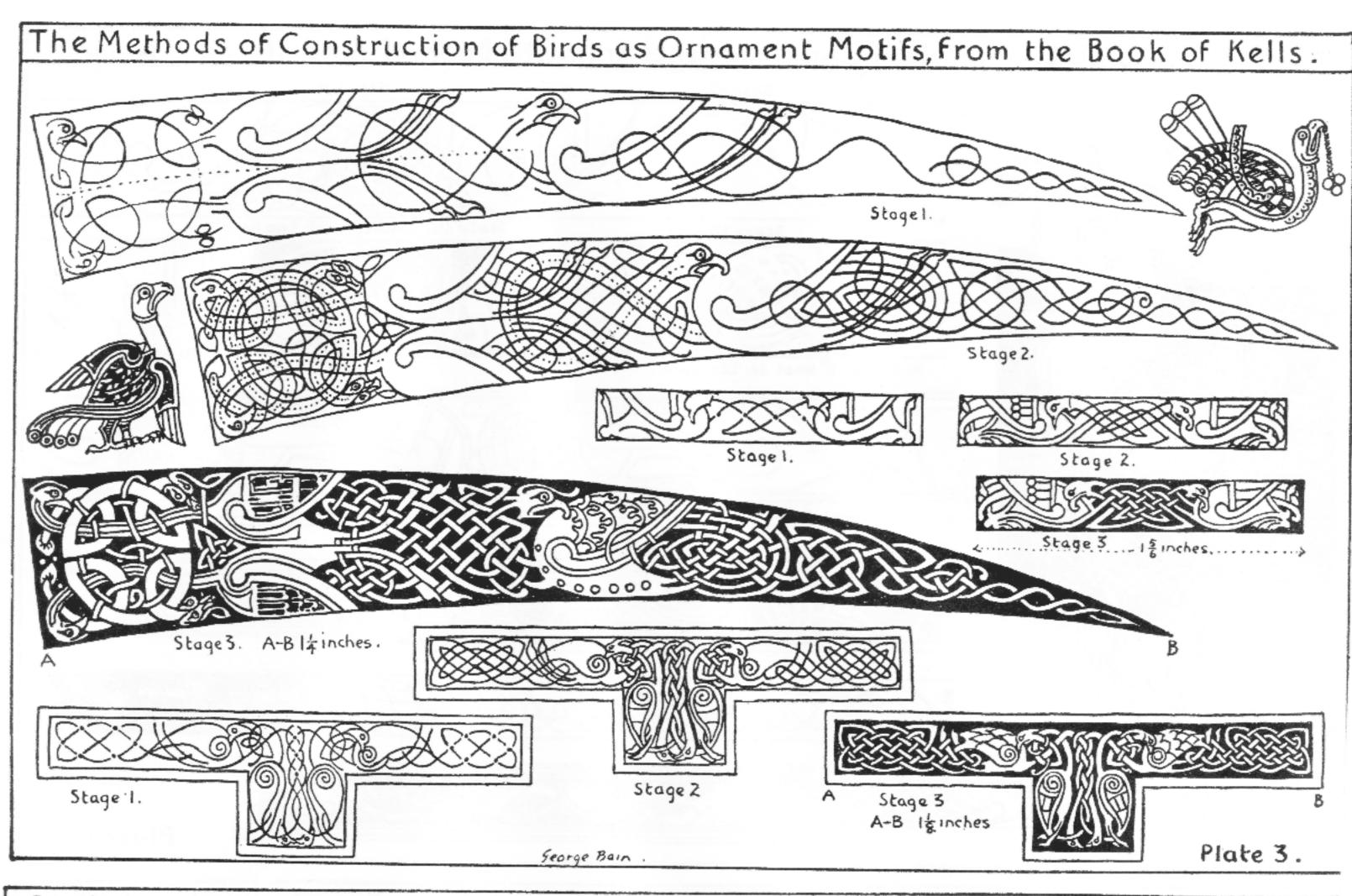


 $Plate\ S$ 

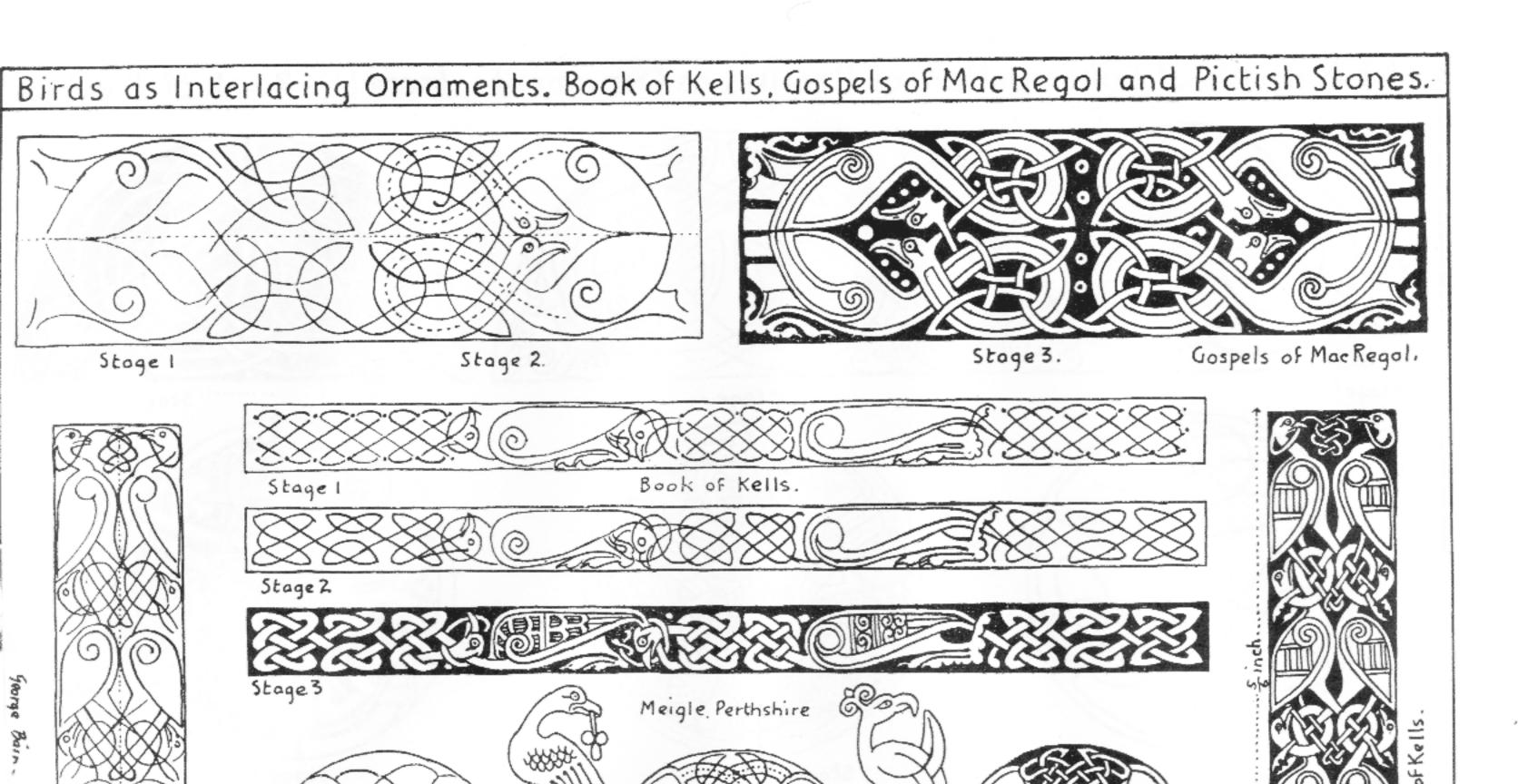
		*;	



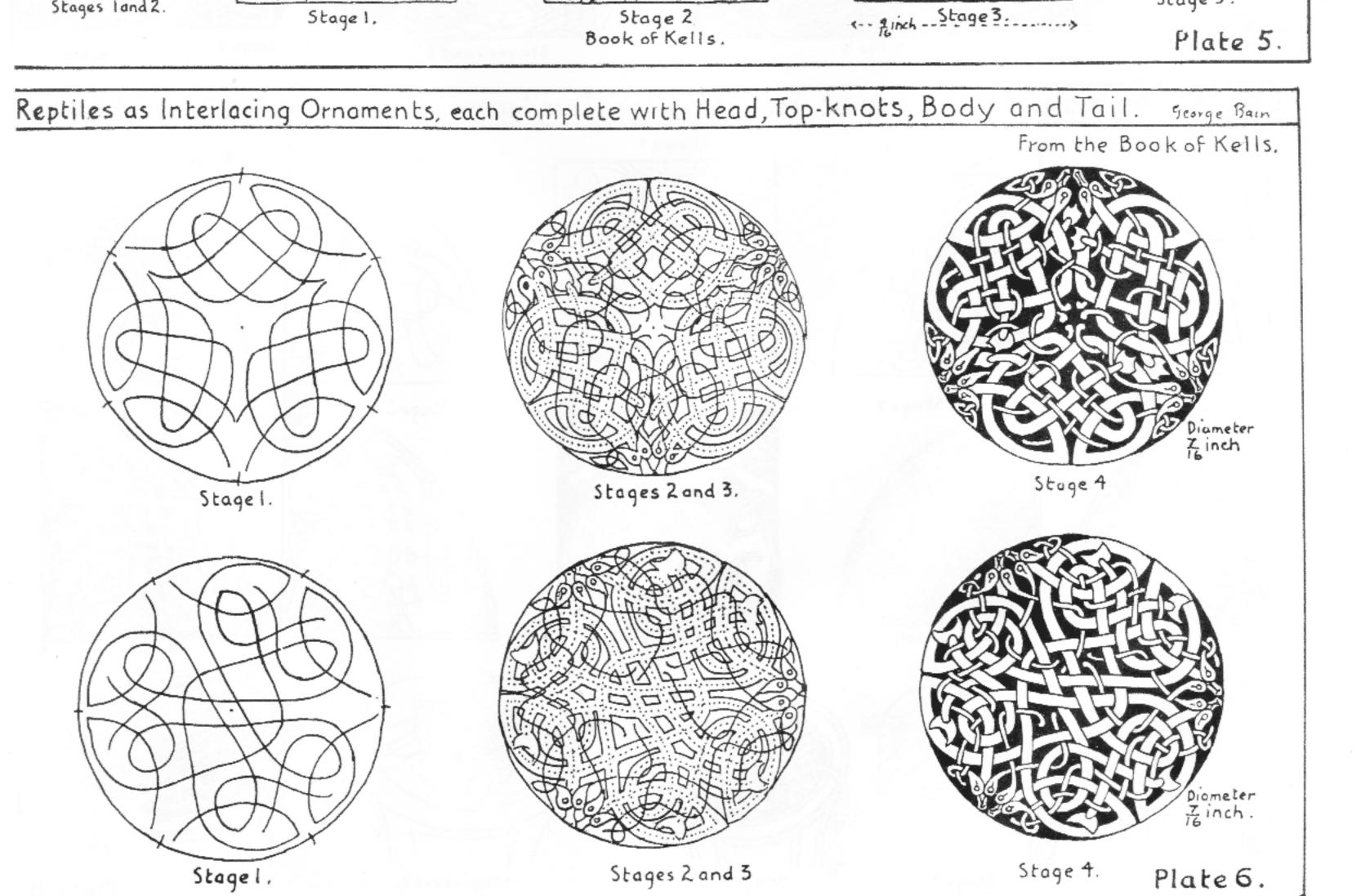






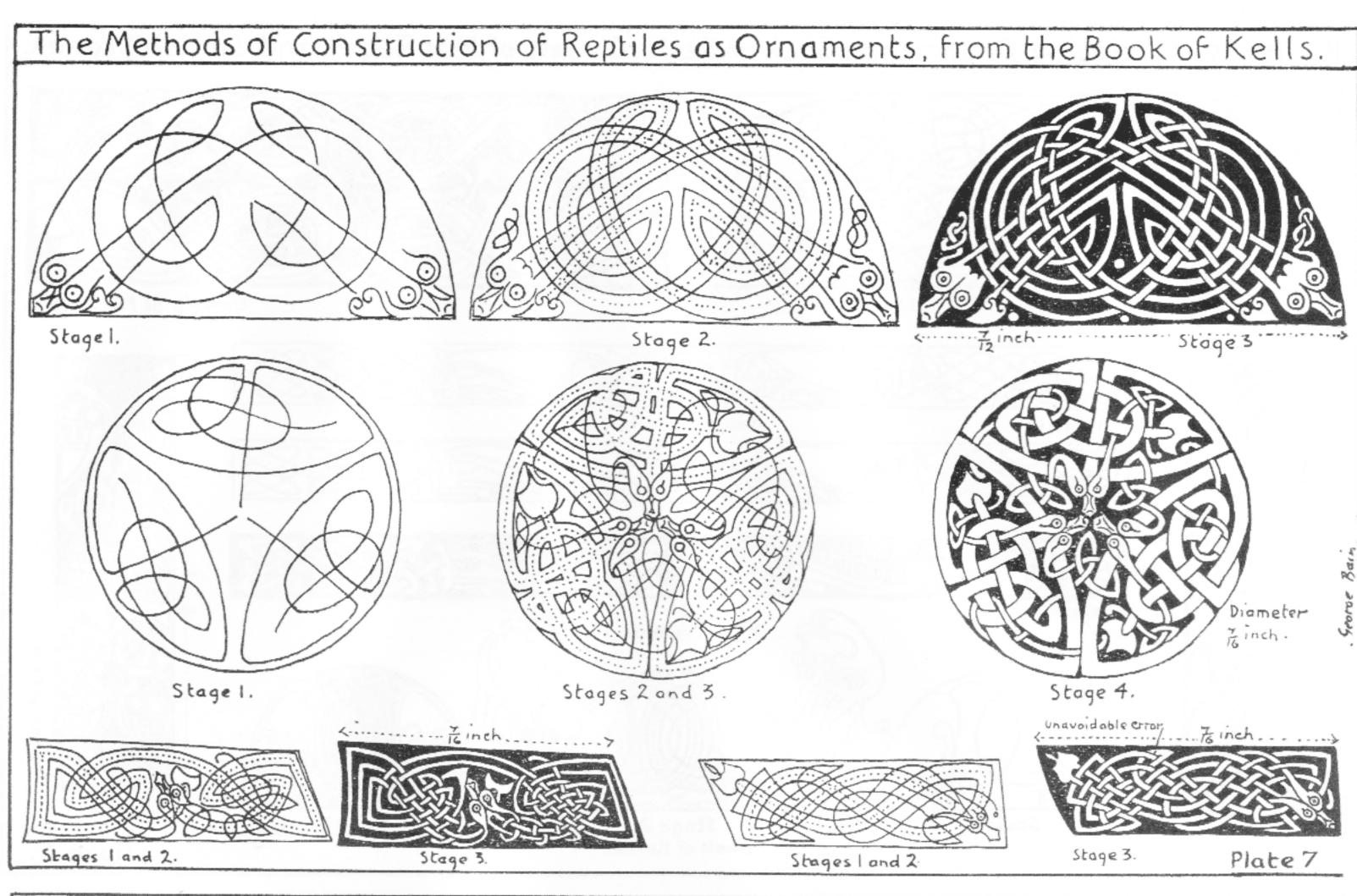


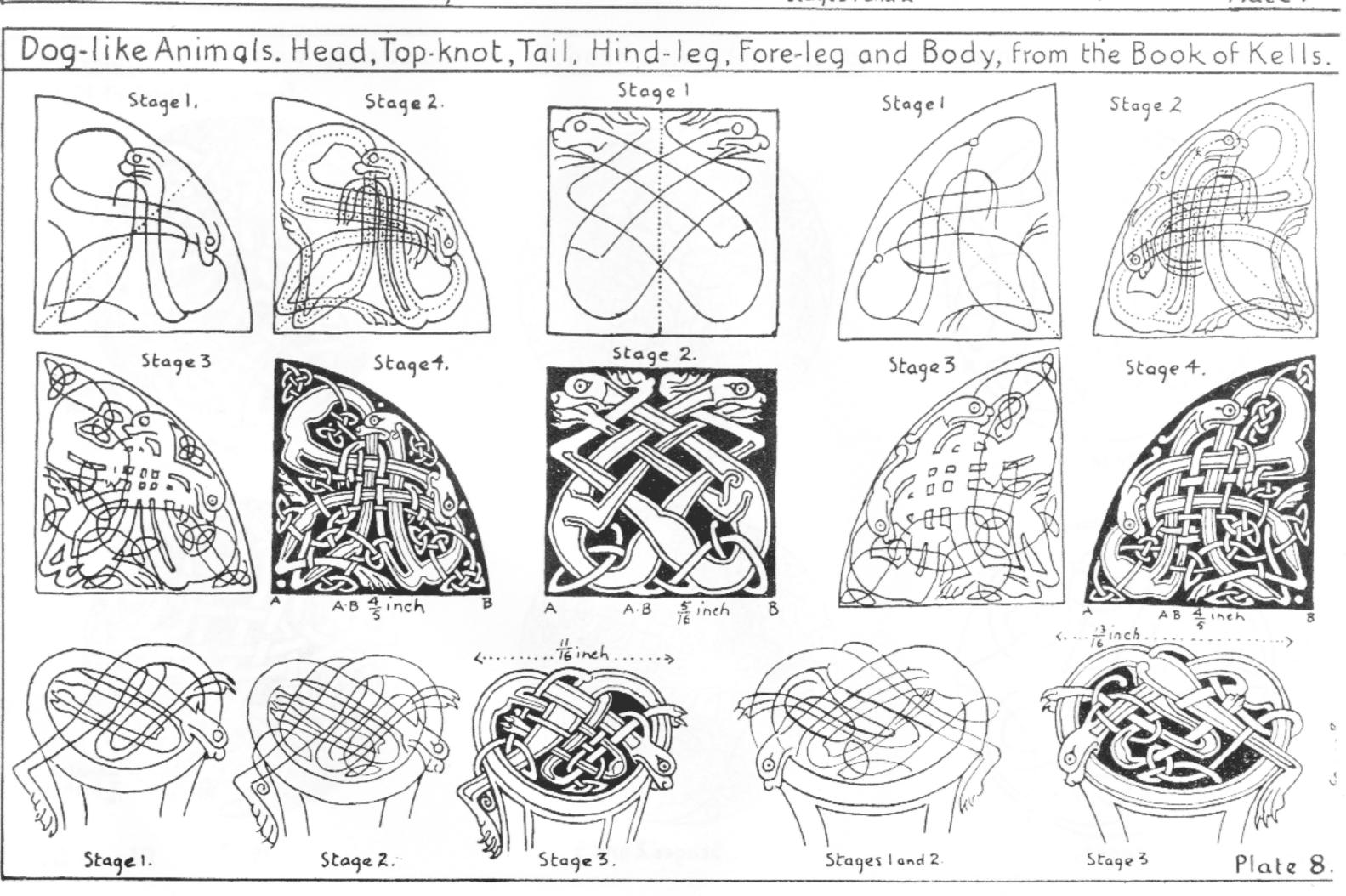
Stage 3.

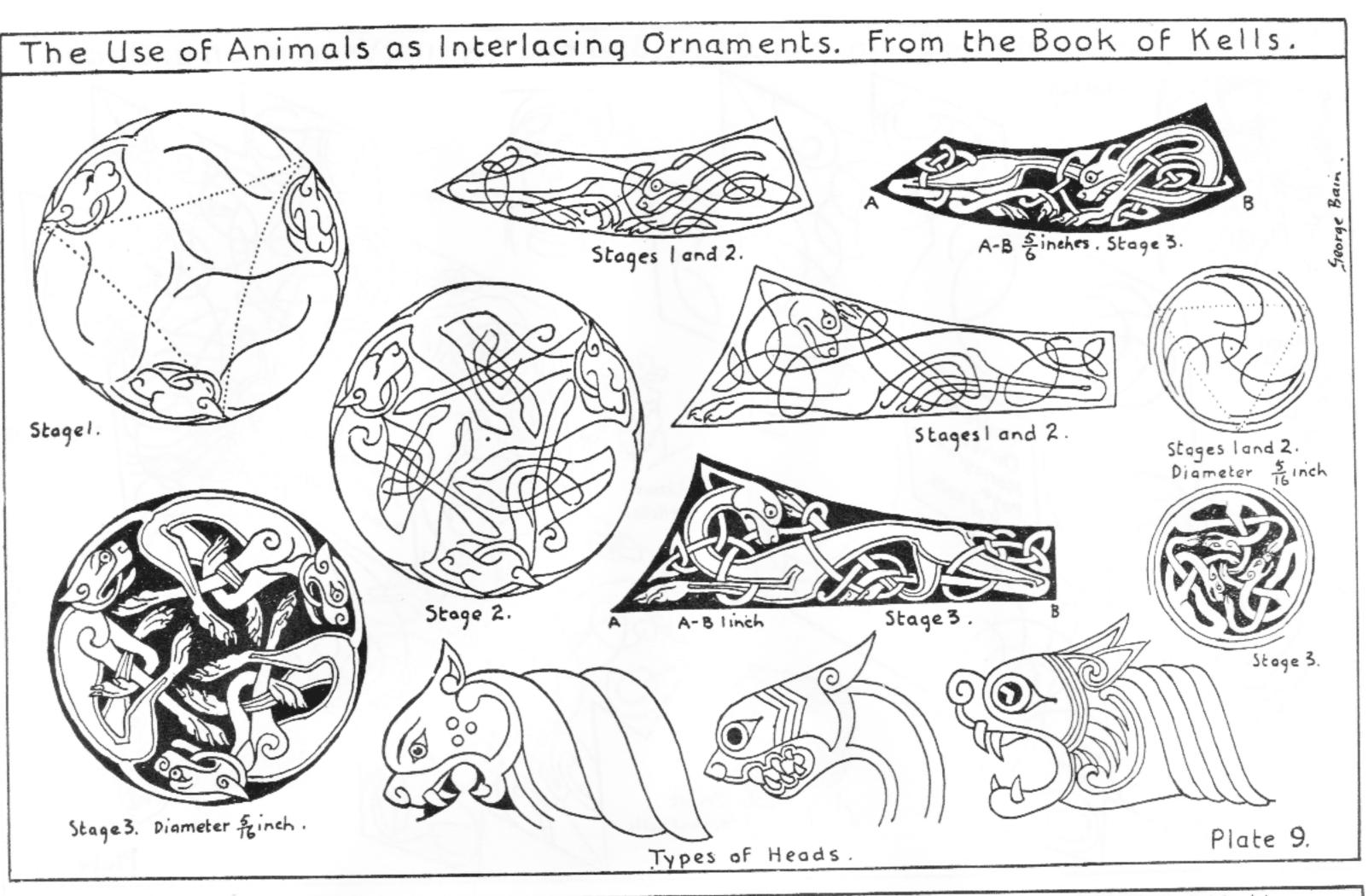


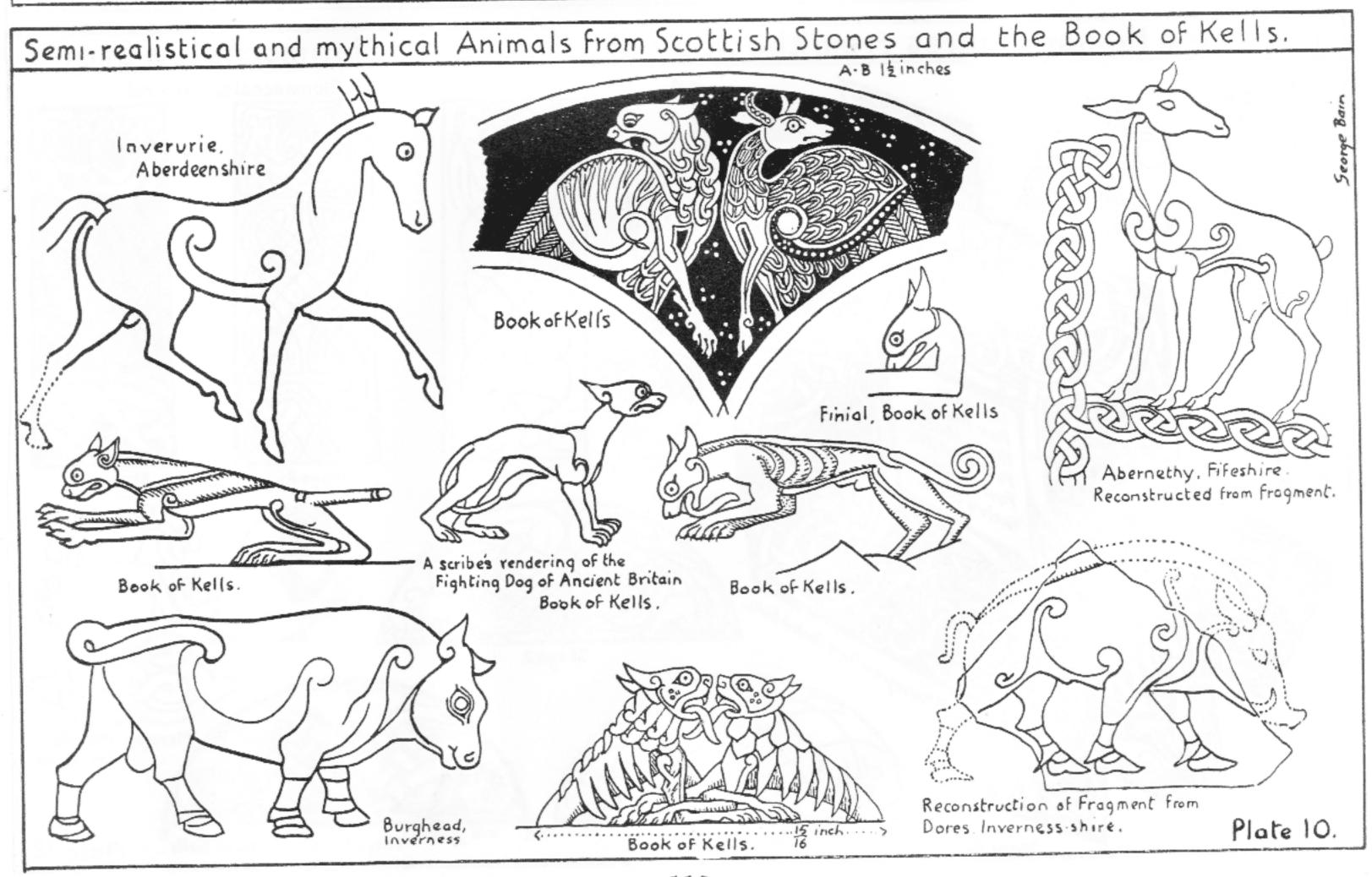
Stages land 2.

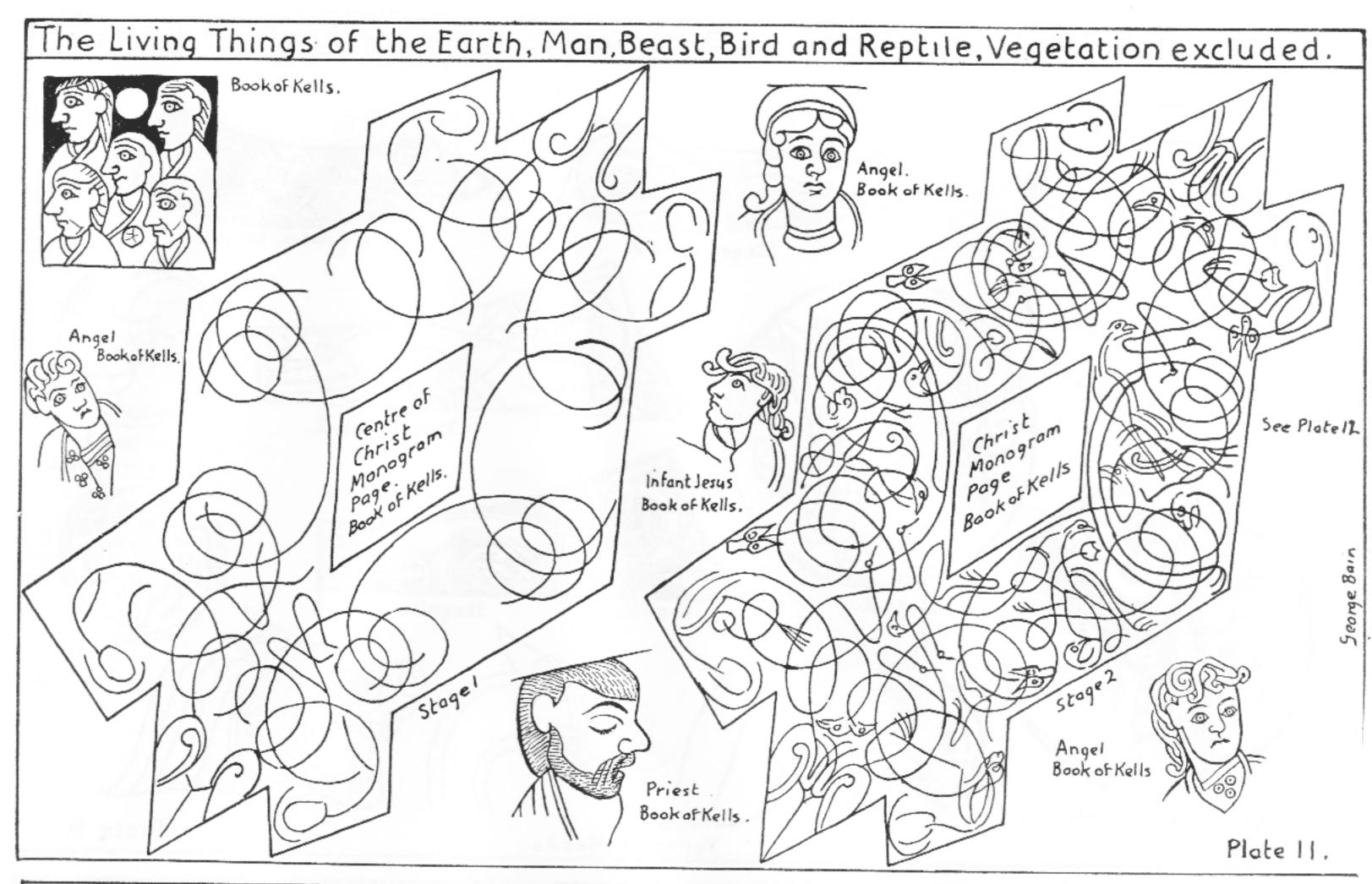
Stage 1.

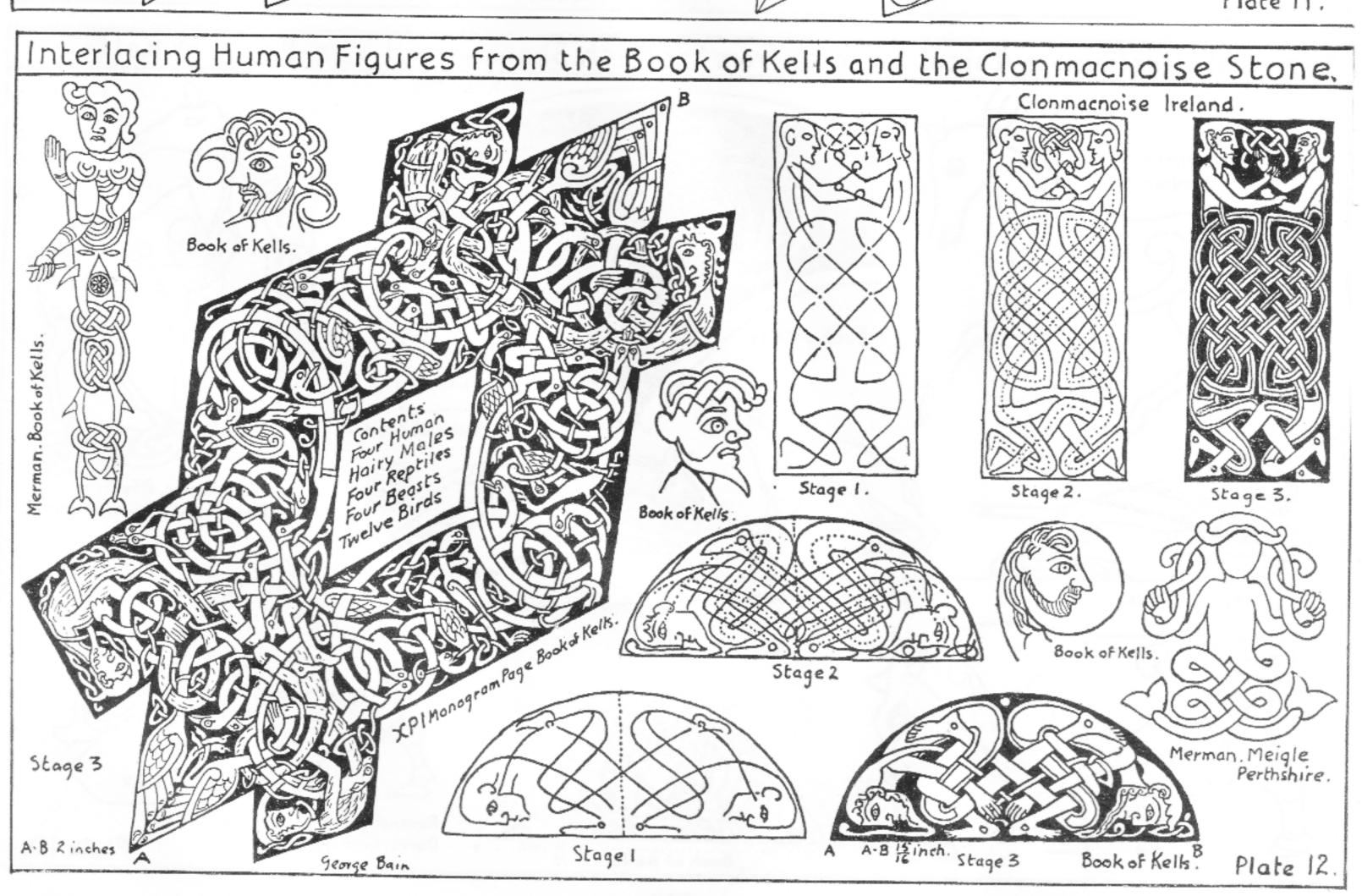


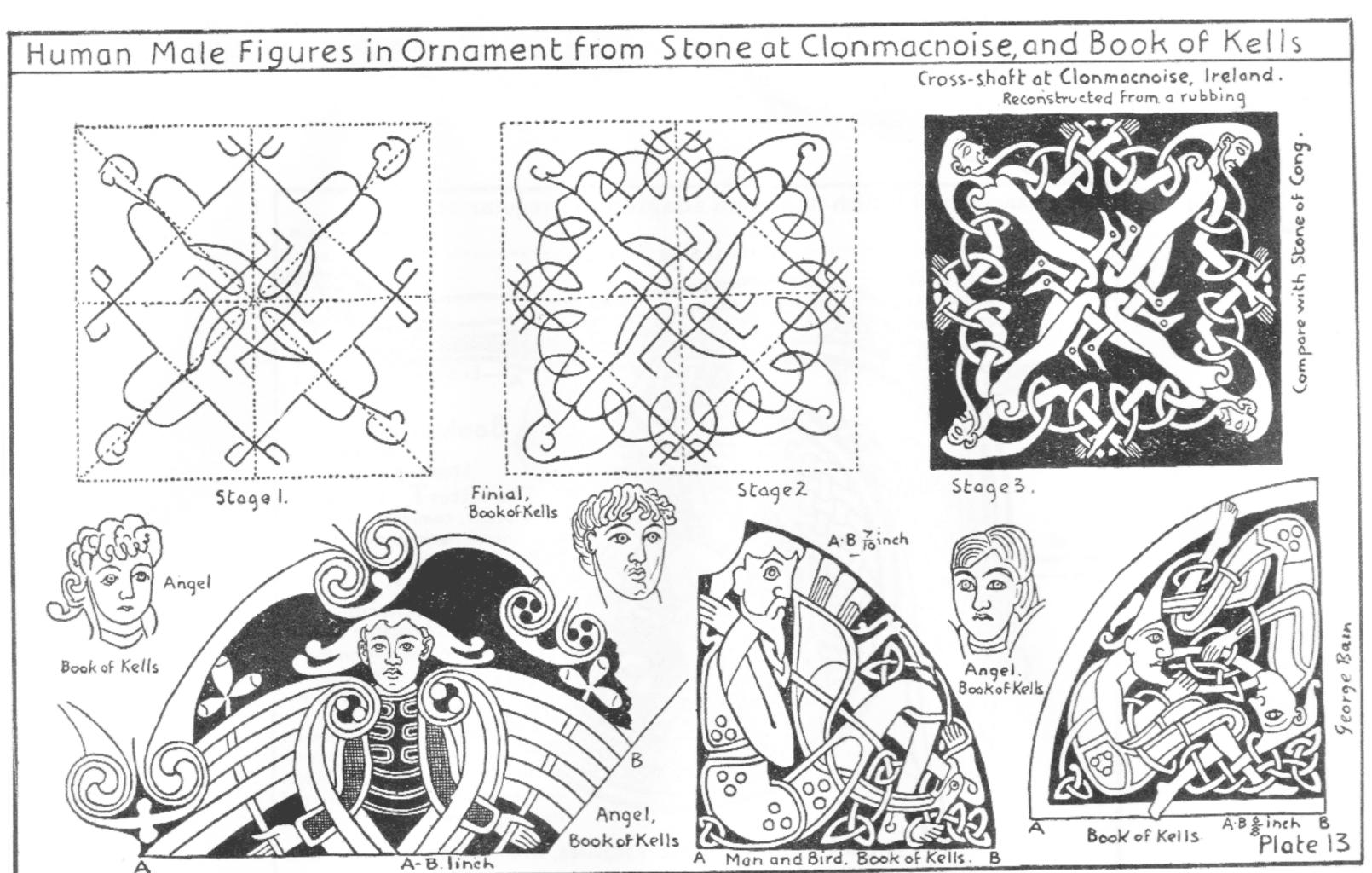


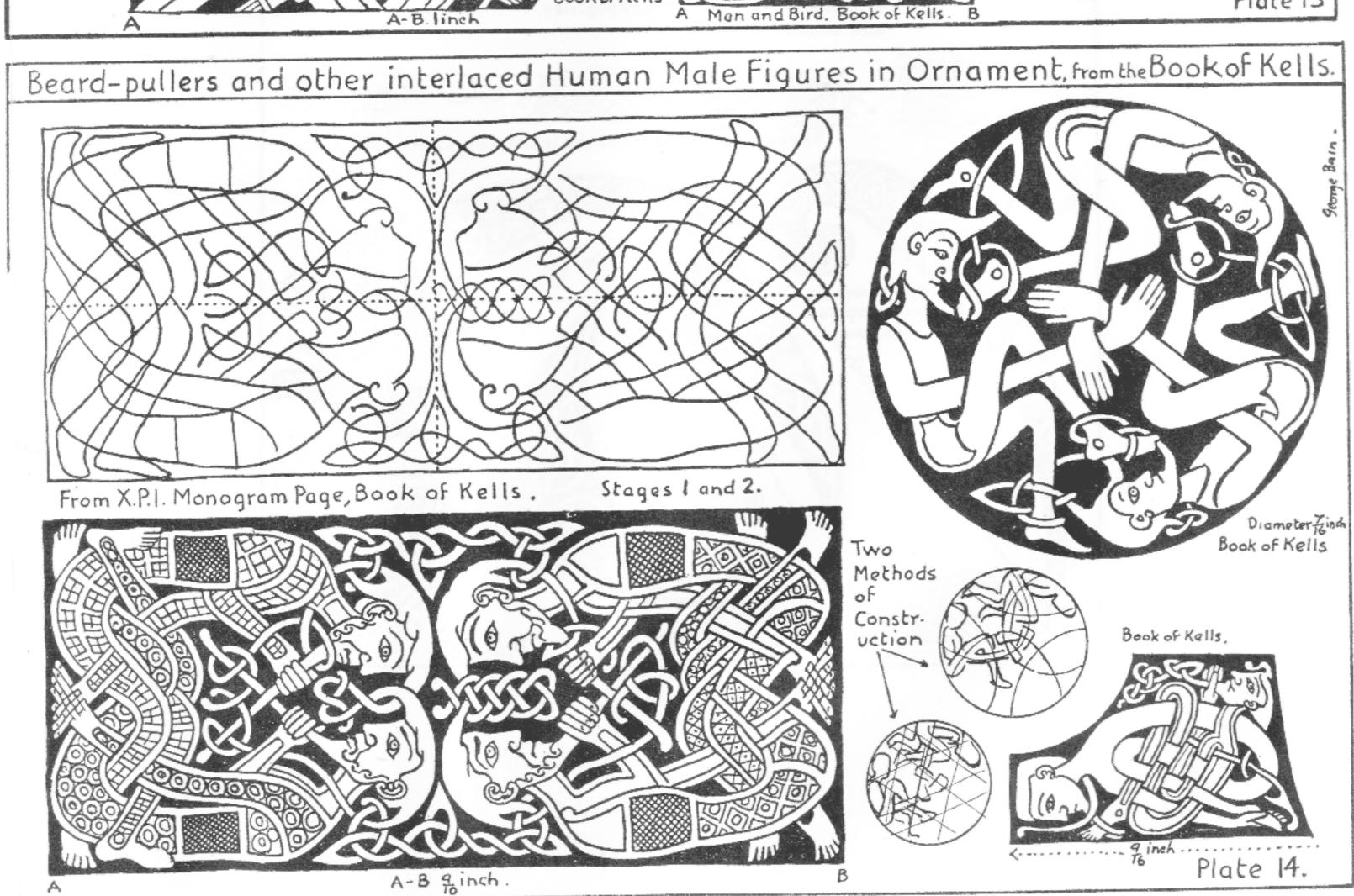












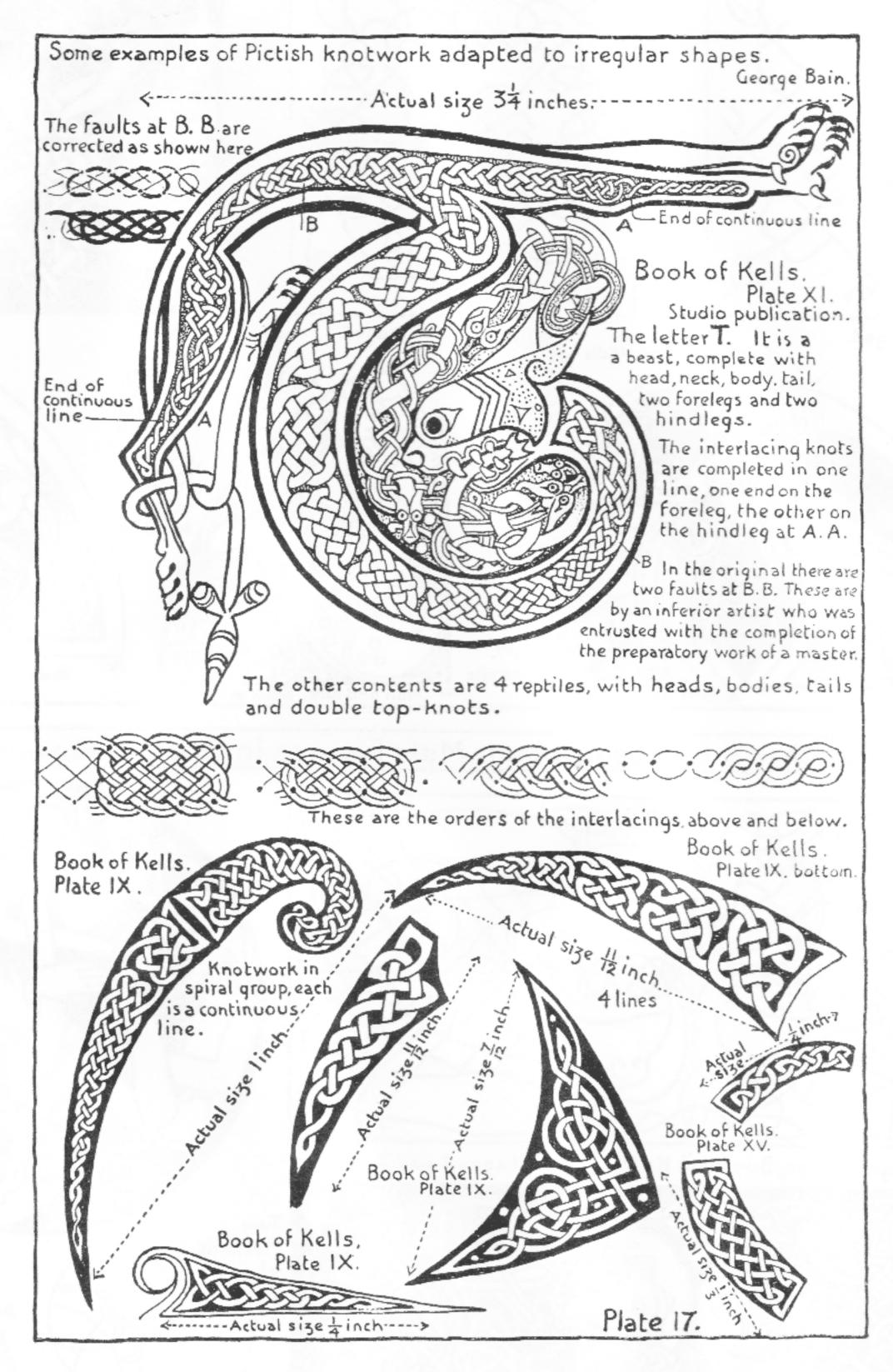


Plate T

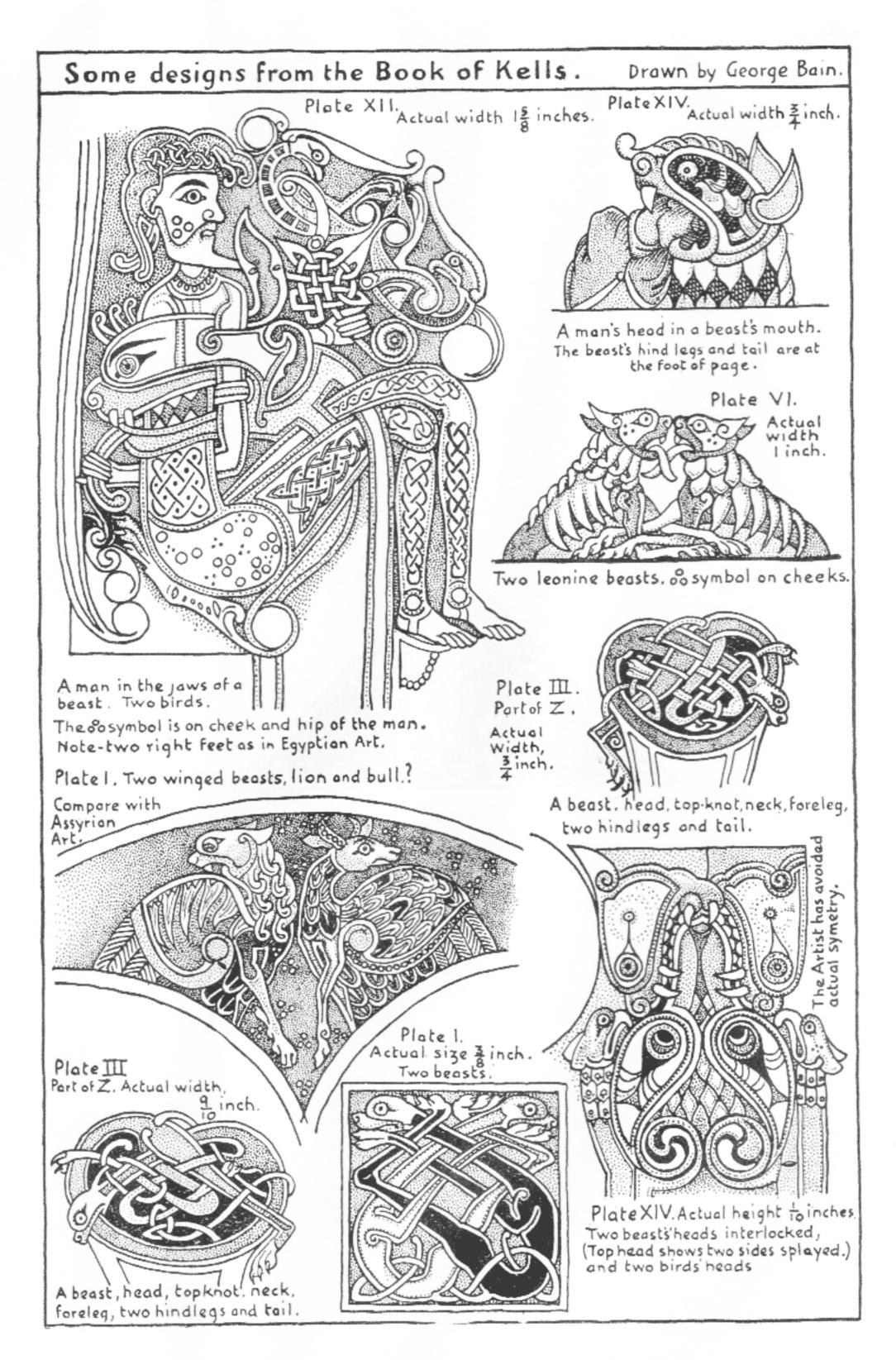
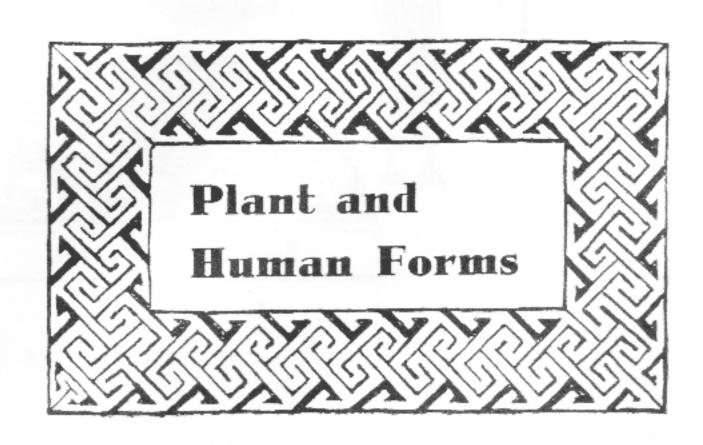


Plate U





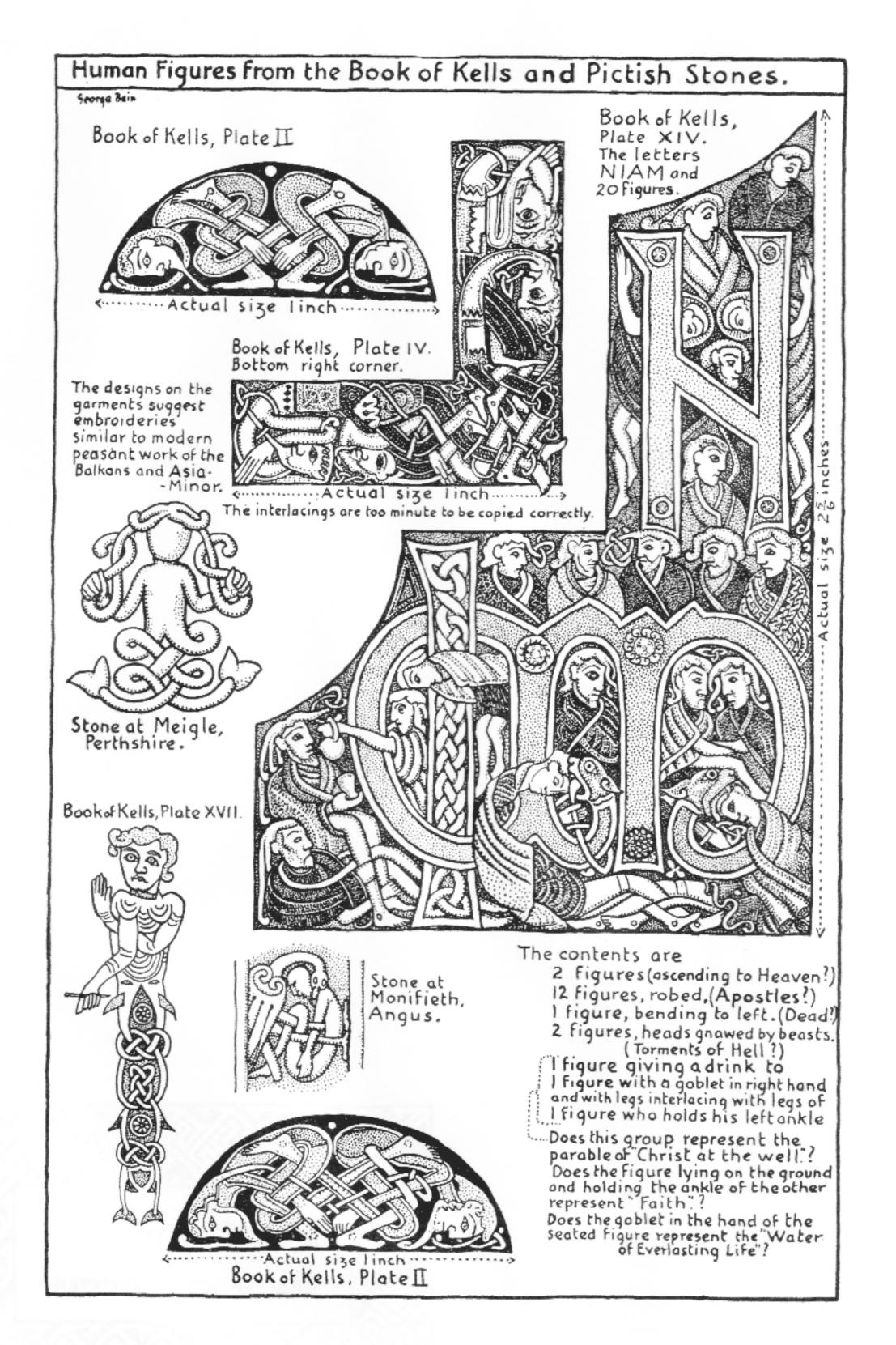


Plate V

#### The Celtic "Tree of Life"

HE references to the plant forms which rarely occur in the Book of Kells and not at all in the Books of Durrow and Lindisfarne, have been used to prove that the two latter books belong to an earlier period. It is the author's opinion, based upon many evidences, that the Book of Lindisfarne is later than the Book of Kells. Foliated ornaments entered Southern Britain with the Roman invasions, and forms of Gothic foliage came with the invaders after the fall of Rome, but they differ from those of the Pictish Stones of East Scotland and those of the Book of Kells. In the portions of that Book which have been available to the author for research, namely the "Studio" publication in colours, of some of its most important pages, and "Celtic Illuminative Art" in black and white, by Rev. Stanford F. H. Robinson, M.A., the examples, with one exception, emerge from pots or beakers, and are shown on Plates A.1 to A.5. The extreme minuteness of these examples make it probable that the pots have not been noticed and no known mention of them has hitherto been made. Without any possible doubt, this is a pagan and, later, a Christian symbol and its use was a religious one and not merely decorative.

The Celtic "Tree of Life" is used by the author to name this symbol. It completes the total of created life, the seven created beings of the Celtic world, Plant, Insect, Fish, Reptile, Bird, Animal and Man. As such it occupies a place on the "Christ Monogram" page of the "Book of Kells," see Plate A.5. The British and Pictish Christian Churches of Pelagius believed that God gave seven faculties to man, Sight, Smell, Taste, Hearing, Feeling, Good and Evil. The belief in the last two faculties was the chief cause of the Pelagian heresies.

Prototypes of the Celtic "Tree of Life" growing from pots in the manner of those of the Pictish stones of East Scotland and of the Book of Kells were very difficult to find from all available works on Asiatic and European ornaments. The few examples found by the author over a number of years of searching are now shown in

the plates. They are from Pre-historic Greece, Cnossus (Crete), Maya (Central America) and Buddhist (India).

The most remarkable similitude of the "Tree of Life" symbol on a Buddhist vessel of elephant ivory, to an example from the Book of Kells, Plate A.2, should be of value to future historians in writing about the migrations and cultures of the peoples of Britain and Ireland prior to the Roman invasions. A well-known authority of pre-historic archaeology named some of the pot types that hold the "Tree of Life" from the author's drawings which are now shown The search for similar forms on these plates. of earthenware, glass and metal pots, shows that Pre-Dynastic Egyptian and pre-historic British, Irish and European food vessels and cinerary urns are very similar.

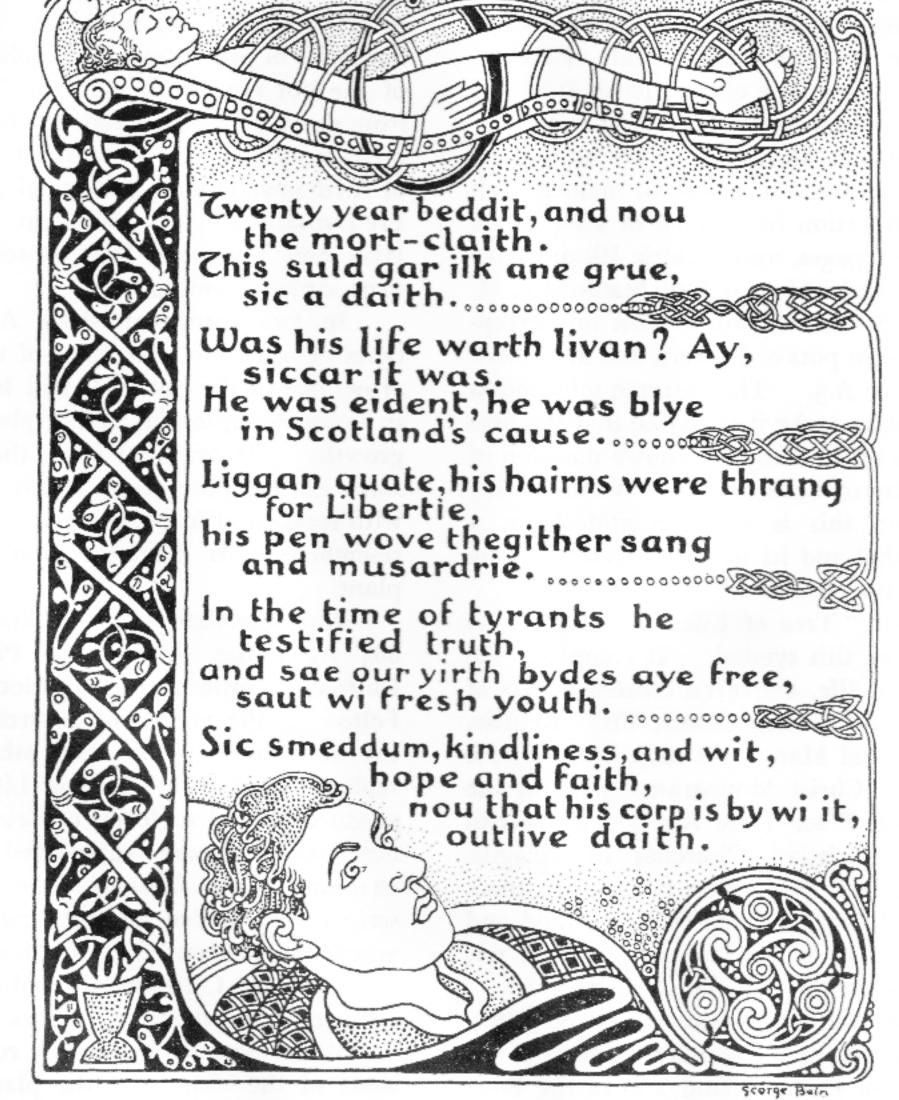
In two panels on Plate A.4, the singing types of birds are also fruits of the plant which grows out of the pot. It will be observed that in every example, the tree or plant has a logical growth. It branches from the main stem to form cornucopiae from which other branches with leaves and fruits emerge. These have more resemblance to mistletoe than to any other plant.

After the victory of the "Synod of Whitby" 664 A.D., the British and Pictish Christian Churches suffered extirpation as heretics. Following the victorious Church of Augustine, the Romanesque vine and other plant forms replaced the Celtic "Tree of Life" and rapidly produced decadent forms of Celtic Art. These eventually became submerged in the everchanging artistic fashions of the medieval manuscripts that ended in meaningless scrolls and vegetation realism of the crudest types.

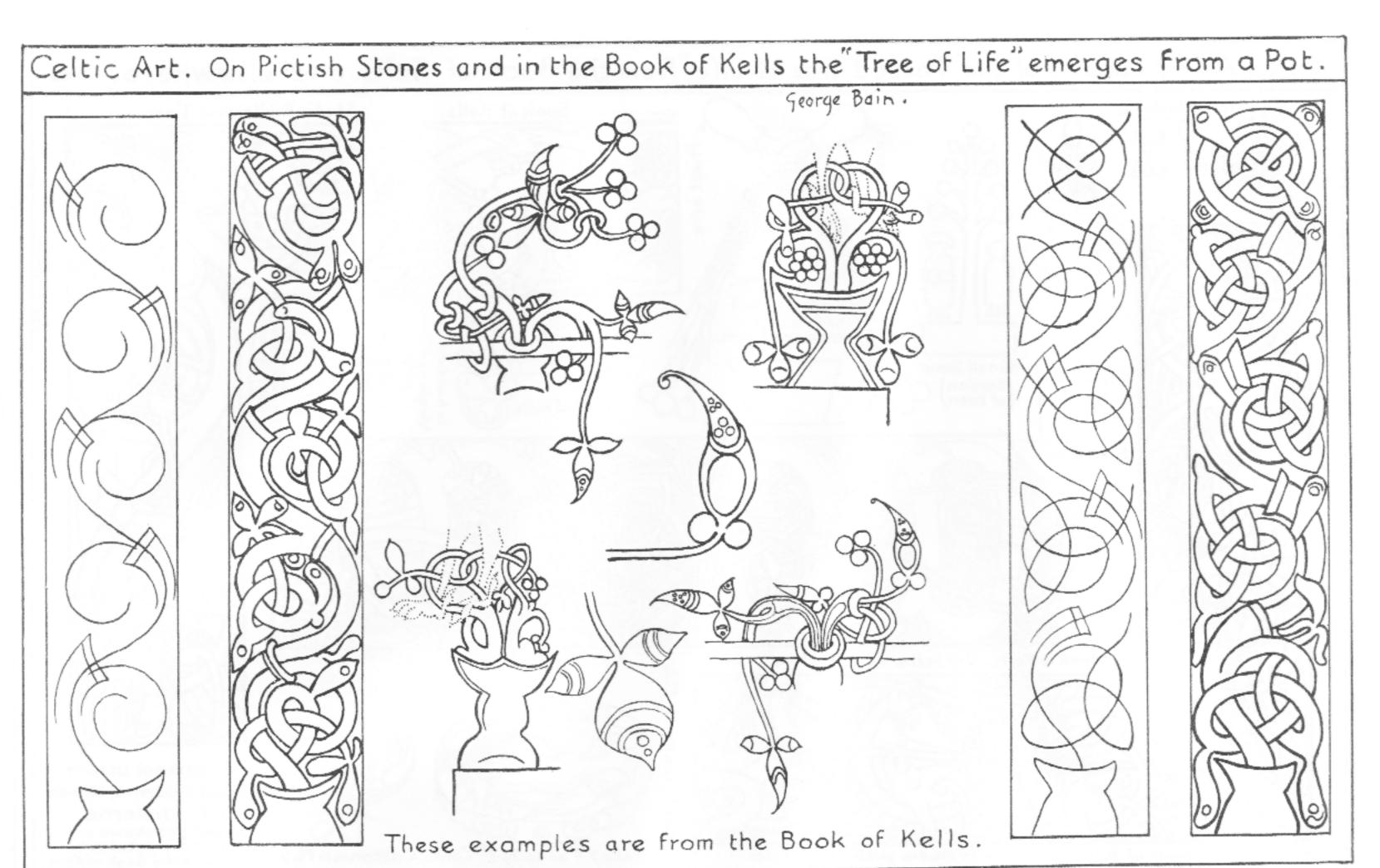
That the Celtic spirit lived on in pockets of culture, is shown by the works of the artists of the Winchester Bible, already referred to where some of the charms of the plant forms of the artists of the Book of Kells are retained, though the pot and the significance of the "Tree of Life" have disappeared into the vast world of decoration.



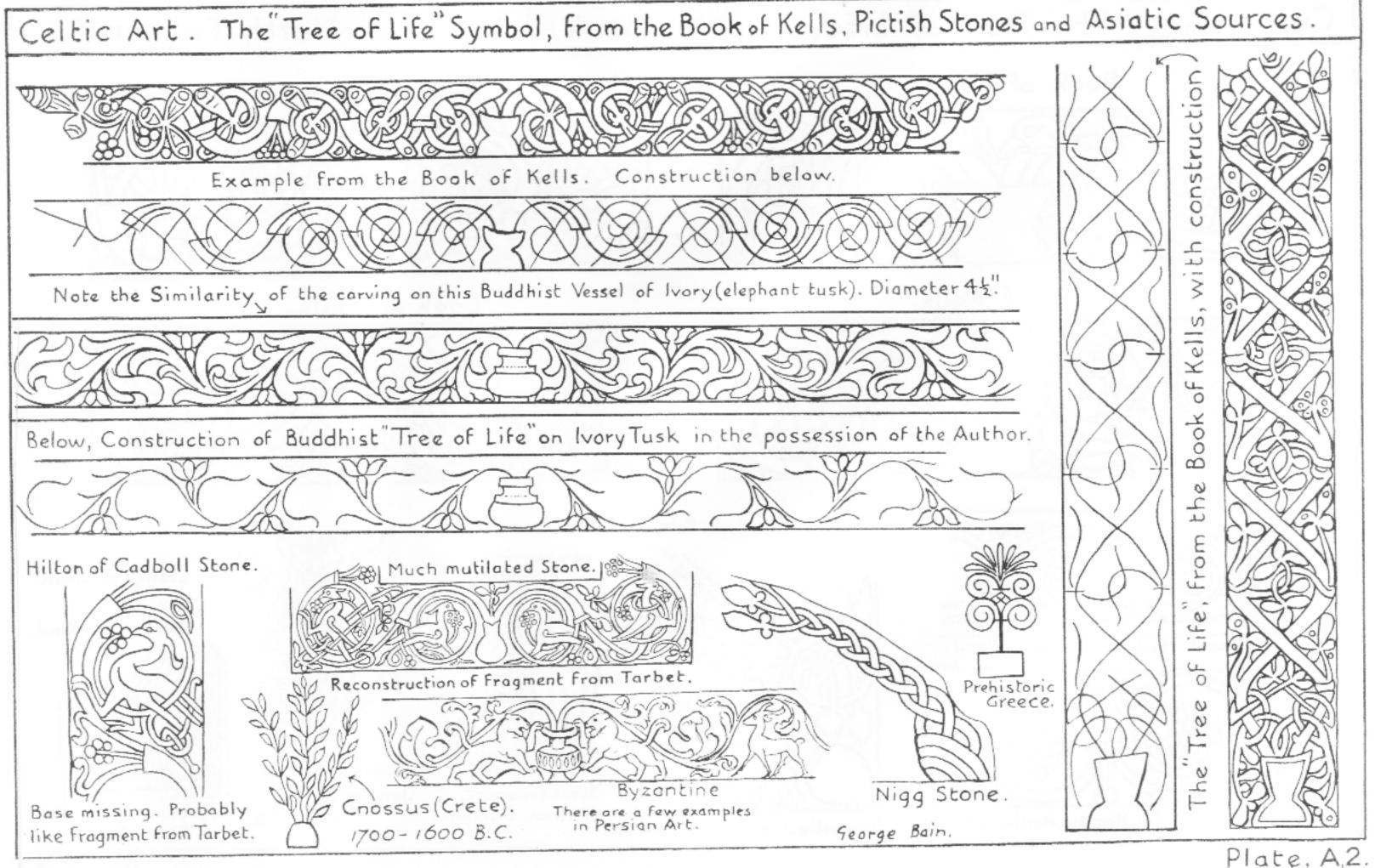
For Willie outar October 1943.

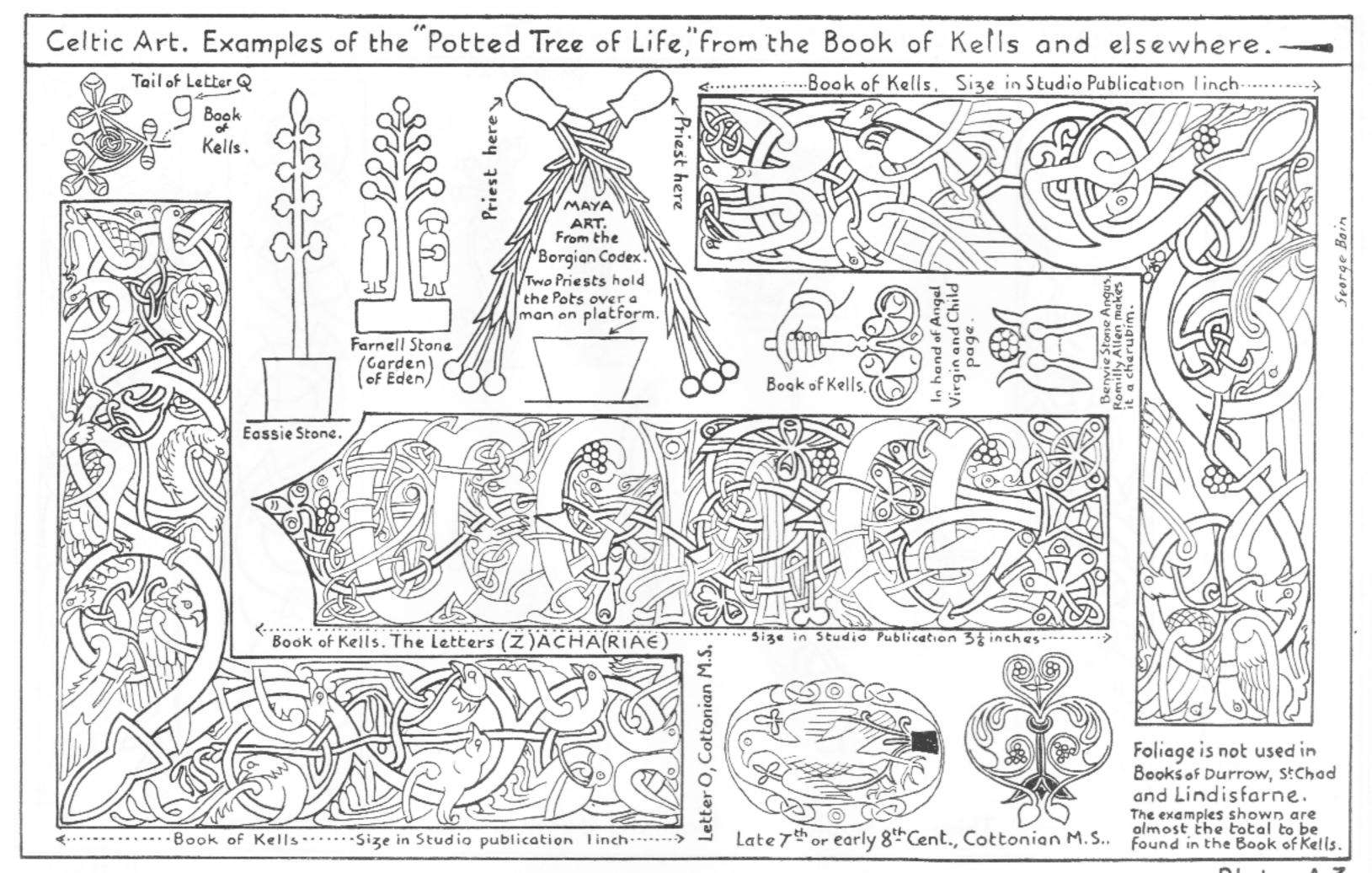


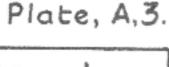
Designed by the Author. Poem by Douglas Young

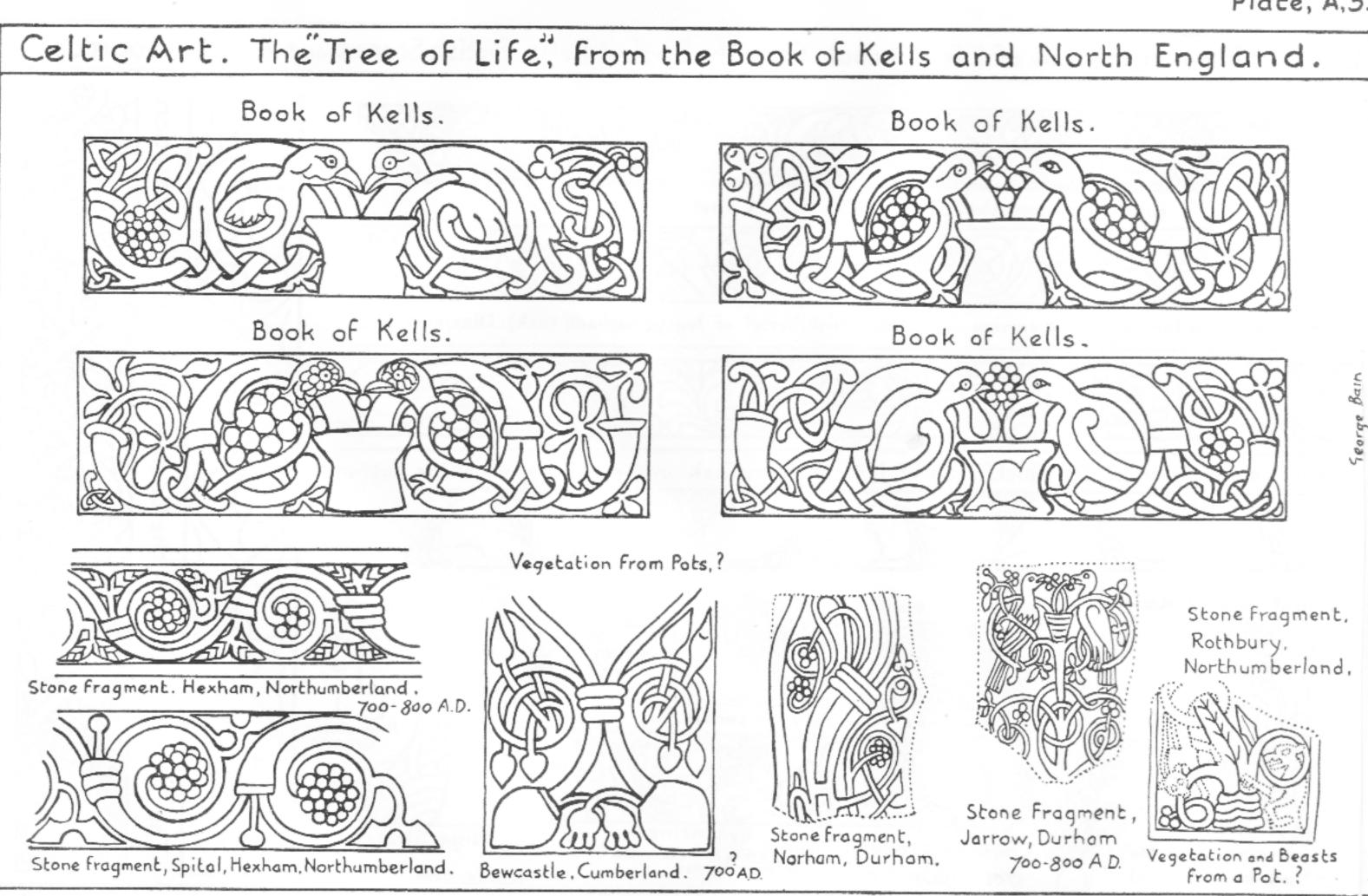


Plate, A,I.









# Semi=realistic Human Figures and Probable Portraits from the Books of Kells and Lindisfarne

Celtic Artists were influenced by the Pagan Laws that forbade the copying of the works of the Almighty Creator. In Celtic Zoomorphic ornaments the physical appearance of man was not copied. His legs, arms, body, topknot, hair and beard interlaced with each other. Portraiture of a living person, in his created form was a heinous crime. The portrayal of the Saints of the sacred Gospels in the Books of Kells and Lindisfarne was that of persons who had long departed from earthly habitation and of the angels who were migrants of the Heavenly Host.

In a similar way persons were dead before they were depicted on the Pictish stones of East Scotland and could no longer be injured by the copies that were made of them. Such beliefs have survived from prehistoric times in many countries and in the Highlands and Islands of Scotland even to the present day. Numerous instances of this may be found.

A sculptor on holiday in Western Scotland was inspired by the figure of an old Highland lady who sat in a chair outside her cottage. He asked permission to make a study of her and was refused. Thinking that the refusal was due to shyness, he made a study mainly by observation and memory. He eventually completed the work in his London studio and sent a plaster copy to her as a present. When she opened the case containing it, she at once got a hammer and smashed the image to pieces. Finding the armature of iron, inside the plaster, she showed it to her friends as further proof of its evil.

Most of the hitherto accepted authorities of Celtic Art thought it necessary to apply the measuring rod of Greek Classical Art to this human figure form of Celtic Art and not to its other forms. Because the British and Irish Celtic artists were ignorant of, or indifferent to the rules of the Greek idealistic and realistic human figures in drawing, painting and sculpture, their abstract statements of human physique and physiogmony were ridiculed and

condemned, while all other aspects of their art were given the highest praise.

These critics, who condemned the Celtic Artists for their inability to copy from living people, with the skill of Leonardo da Vinci, and for their ignorance of the manners and rules of the great Greek sculptors and painters, and who could go into raptures over the other forms of Celtic Art, cannot be reliable authorities. They may have had some knowledge of the art of the Greeks but their knowledge of all other forms of Celtic Art was mere ability to distinguish its differences from the arts of other peoples as one may compare a cow with a motor car and yet know nothing of the anatomy or structure of either.

These other forms of Celtic Art may be described as a combination of magic, invention and imagination, with logic, mathematics and geometry which had an original function of teaching as well as adorning. This dual-purpose-art retained its philological or communicative purpose throughout its whole development which reached its apex in the Book of Kells. One such authority, after spending hours with a magnifying glass examining the pages of the Book of Armagh, without finding a single mistake in interlacing looked upon that as its miraculous quality!!

Volumes of praise containing few words of understanding and none of its methods of construction, have been written and are still being written on Celtic Art, although it is over fifty years since Romilly Allen opened a way to research by finding that some knotwork panels were based upon pleating. Even he thought that Celtic Artists were mere copyists who unwittingly imparted their Celticisms to the things they had copied from Classical Art. The intense personalities of the imaginary portraits of Matthew, Mark, Luke and John from the Book of Kells and the manners of representing the features, hair, hands, feet and dress, etc., show conclusively that the Celtic Artists had gained the required knowledge of such forms from the three dimensional arts of the carver and the metal worker. The heads of the saints are designed and constructed without undercutting, as models should be carved, for metal casting from sand, where every shape must be designed for that purpose.

The picturesque abandon of the artist in paint, who has no other controlling medium than his paint is not found in the Book of Kells. All evidences point to craft traditions that had beginnings at the same source as the Asiatic Arts, the Assyrian, the Persian, the Indian and the Chinese. The stylised Egyptian profile figures with two right or two left feet or hands have counterparts in Celtic Art, and the great interest in the beauty and movements of animals, particularly the horse on the Pictish stones of East Scotland, undoubtedly show a connection with the art of the Assyrians. Most of the human figures of the Pictish stones whether on foot or on horse are in profile.—See Plate B.4.

The Celtic Artists of the MSS. period were more interested in front or three quarter front face than in profile. Comparisons of the types of features, tonsures and colours of hair and eyes with such descriptions as are to be found in the Celtic pagan and Early Celtic Christian literature show that they are similar. Of the examples from the Book of Kells shown on Plate B.1 and B.2, 15 persons have grey or blue-grey eyes, 4 have yellow-grey eyes, 5 have brown eyes, 15 have yellow hair, 5 have red-gold hair, 4 have brown hair, 5 have brown beards, 2 have black beards.

R. A. S. Macalister, Litt., D.F.S.A., remarks in "Ireland in pre-Celtic Times" "All persons of importance native to Ireland are described as having Golden Hair. Most persons in subordinate positions and those who are spoken of with scorn are Dark-Haired."

In all probability the same conditions existed in North Britain.

"As a rule yellow hair is described as long and flowing. Dark hair as close-cropped.

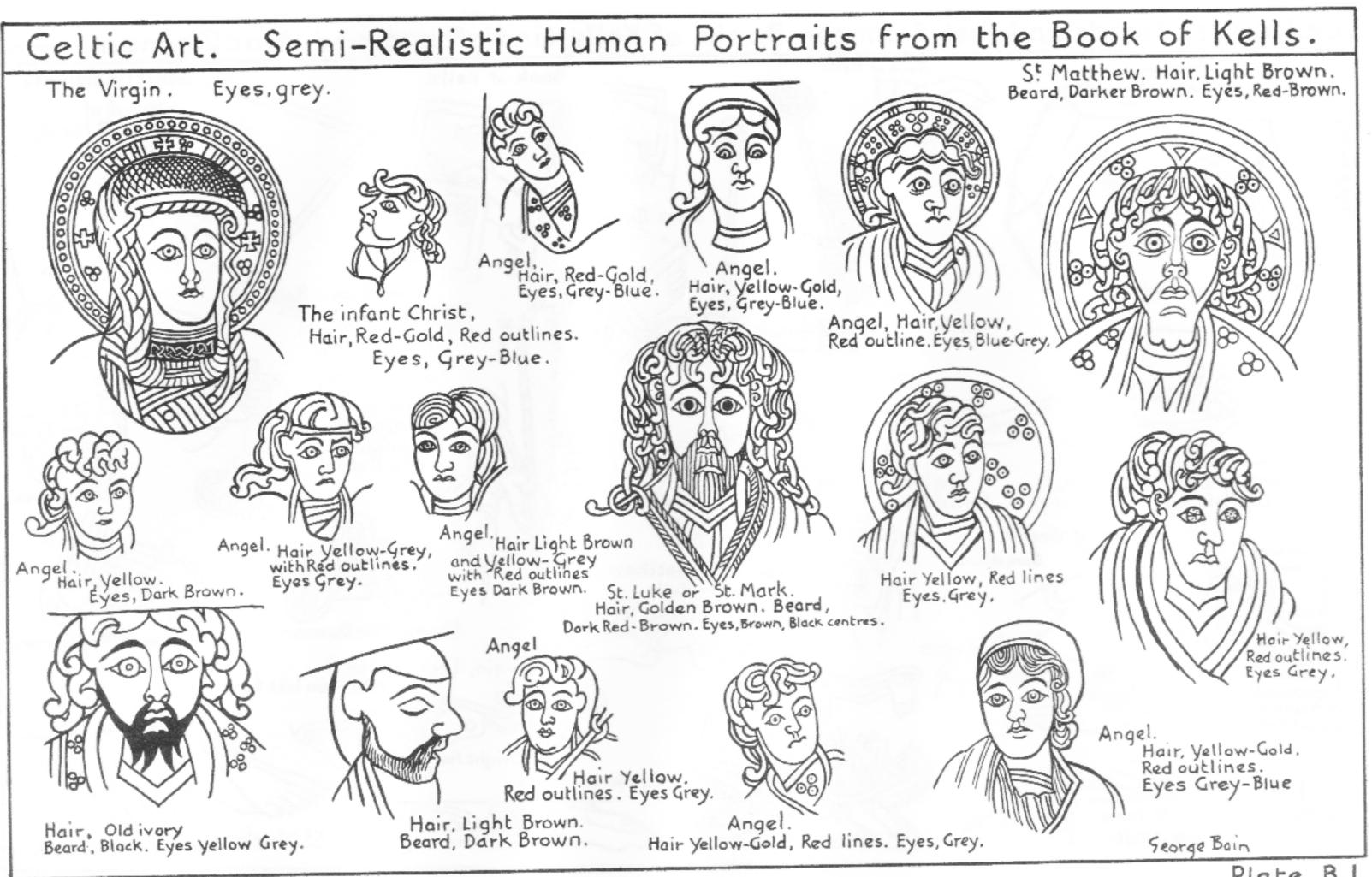
Ruling classes are marked by long flowing locks. Enslaved classes with close-cropped black or brown heads." In this connection it is interesting to note the 4 panels on Plate B.2.

King Cormac MacAirt is thus described in the Book of Ballymote. "Hair-braids slightly curled, all golden upon him, like blue-bells his eyes, like the sheen of a dark-blue blade his eyebrows." Yellow hair, bluish eyes with black eyelashes and eyebrows are plentiful with the youth of North and West Scotland. The Book of Kells shows many of this type.

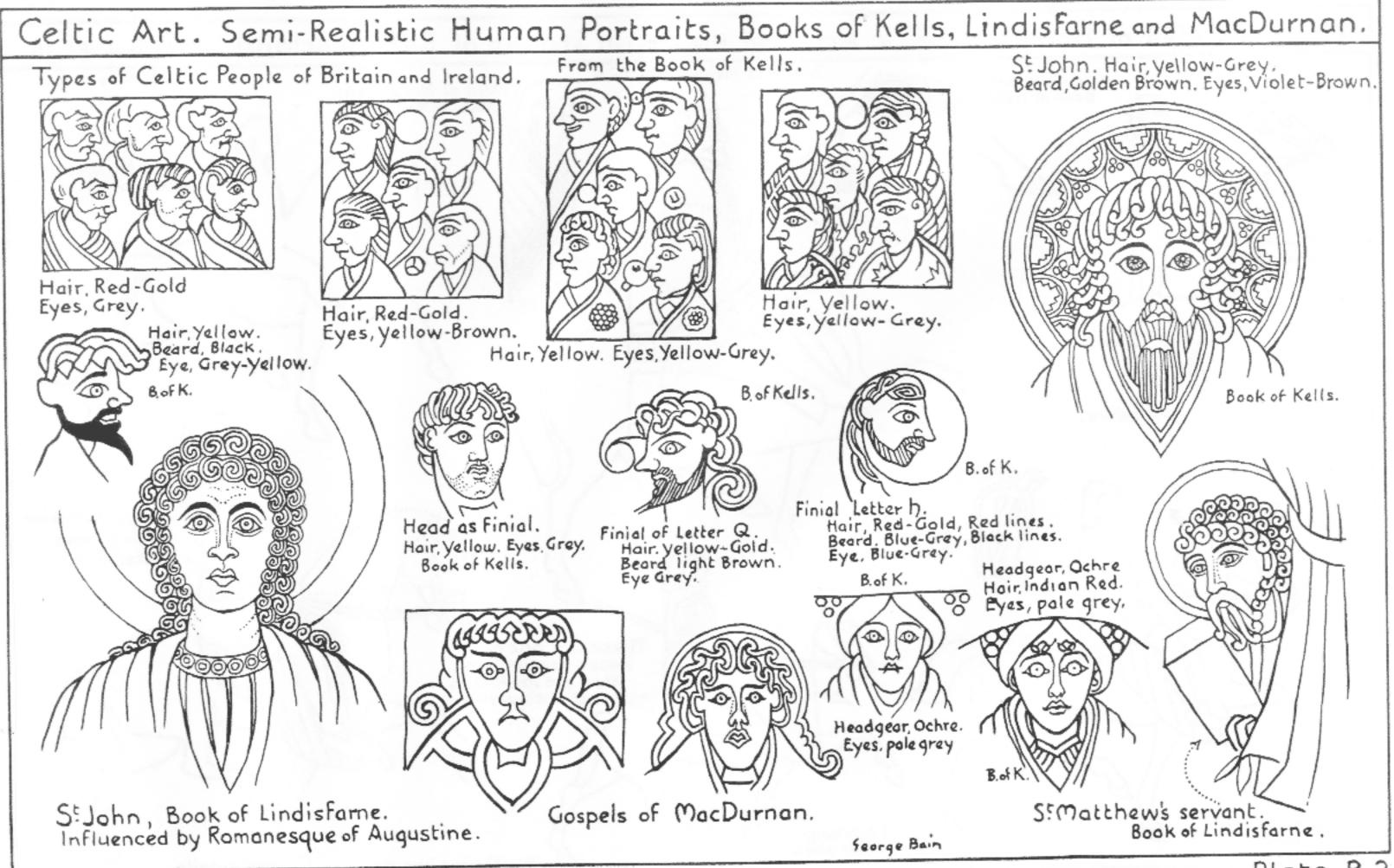
The great variety of hair-dressing styles including those of the angels, who, if they are females are the only ones depicted, except the Virgin Mother, and the Samaritan woman holding a goblet of water for Christ to drink in the letter A of QUONIAM, on the page of the opening word of St. Luke's Gospel shows that the artists of the Book of Kells appreciated the skilful work of the tonsure-artists of the period. The symbol of Sanctity, three circles forming an equilateral triangle, adorns the garments, sacred books and haloes of the saints and angels. A comparison of the St. John of the Book of Kells and the St. John of the Book of Lindisfarne, shows that the latter has the Romanesque influence of the Church of Augustine. portrait which occupies a full page and the portraits of the other apostles on full pages are probably later additions and are painted by artists who were not conversant with all the methods of construction of the native Celtic Artists.

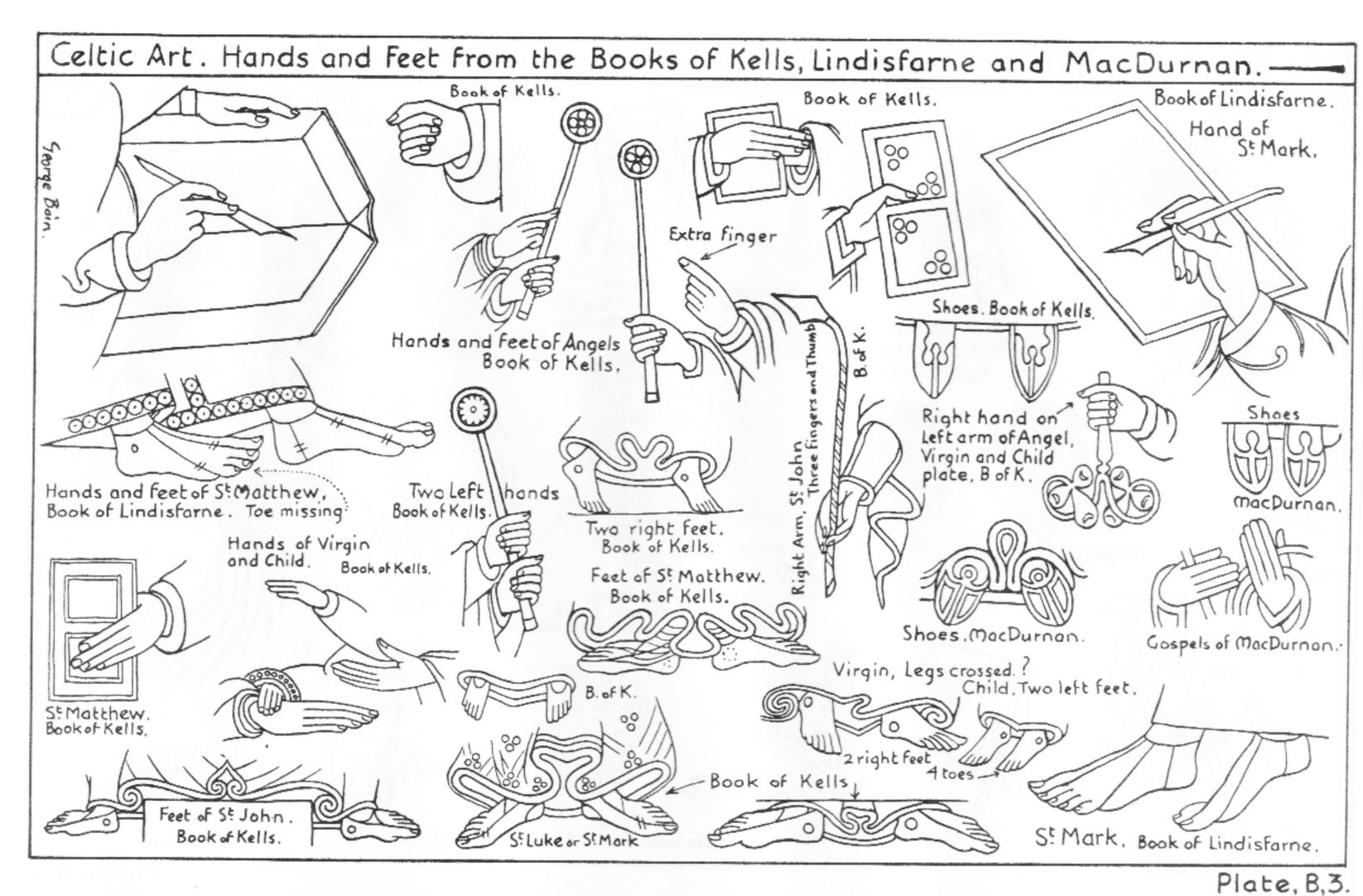
That the Celtic spirit was not extinguished is shown by the work of the Artists of the the Winchester Bible 1140-1160 A.D., who produced human figures which are the direct descendants of the schools that produced the human figures of the Book of Kells, but they lacked the knowledge of the mathematical formulae which made possible the other forms of Celtic Art.

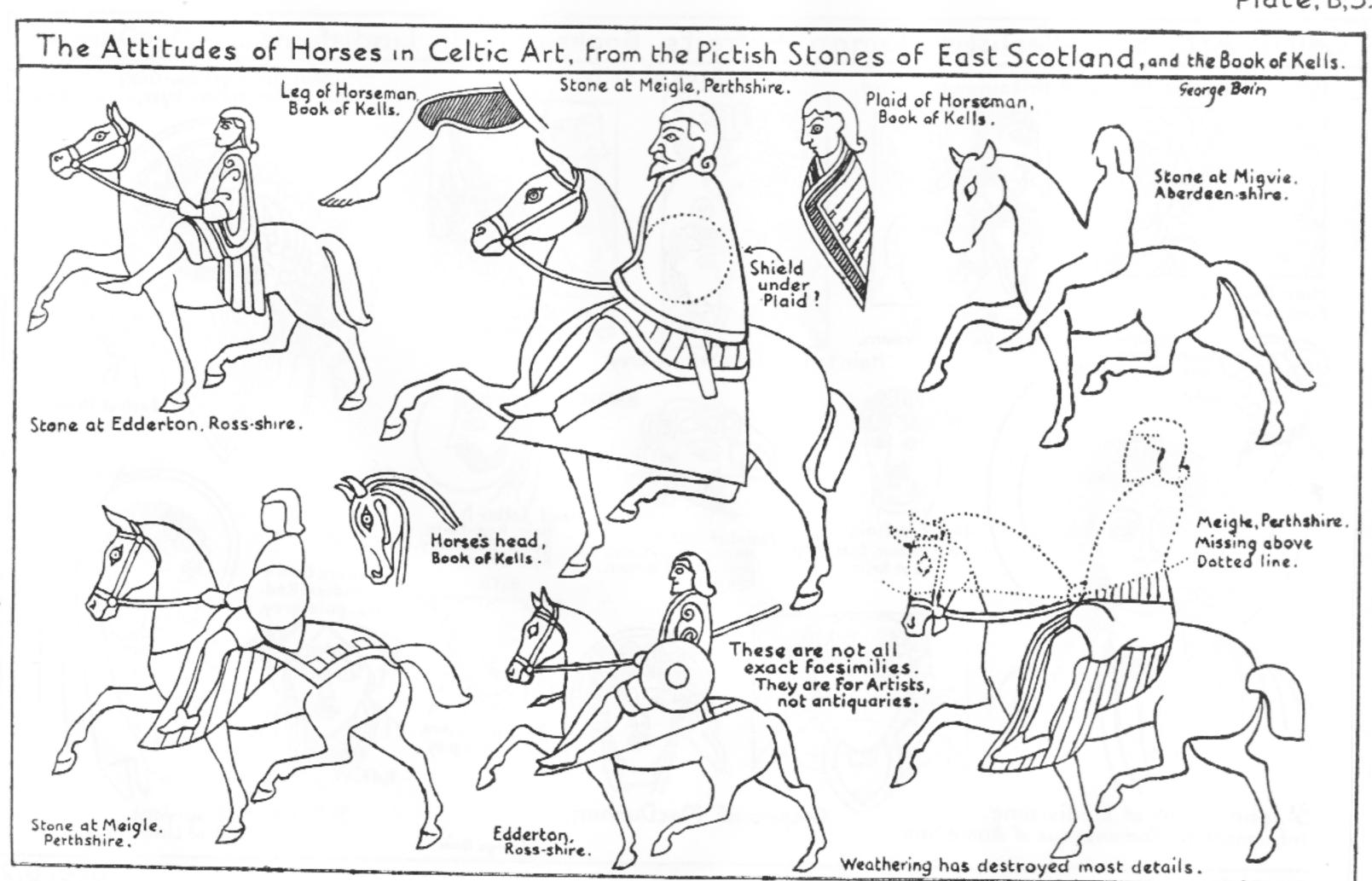




Plate, B. I.











### Applications of Celtic Art, Ancient and Modern

The many processes and technicalities necessary for the various crafts to which the methods of construction of Celtic Art may be applied will not be described in this book.

Most craftsmen have such knowledge and students who wish to acquire it, have the libraries, arteraft classes and the craftsmen in their own districts to aid them.

The mathematical formulae methods of construction for knotwork, keys and spiral patterns, that enable the student to draw intricate designs for many purposes, with simplicity, must be translated into charts to suit the requirements of knitting, carpet making and weaving. A system suitable for knitting may be the subject of a separate text book. The examples of knitwear illustrated herein were knitted from charts of this system.

The old testament is a reliable source of information for the bronze age processes of metal workers', jewellers' and embroiderers' arts. A reference to brass casting in 1st Kings, 7th Chap., 46th Verse, states "and all these vessels, which Hiram made to King Soloman, in the plains of Jordan did the King cast them, in the clay ground between Succoth and Zärthen". In the preface to Zöomorphics mention is made of ornaments carved on the bones of deer, and sheep (found in an Irish Crannog). Their probable uses were as models to make moulds for casting small panels in metals for jewellers' art. A "squeeze" in a moist clay or in some other plastic material would make such a mould. If the ornament had been carved upon a curved surface of bone, it could be flattened by being laid upon a flat surface, with no injury to its carved details. Moulds carved in stone were used for casting bronze spear-heads and hammers in the earliest bronze-age.

Great art and technical skill are expressed in Ecclesiesticus, Chap. 65, Verse 12, "He set a crown of gold upon the mitre wherein was engraved *Holiness* an ornament of honour, a costly work, the desires of the eyes, goodly and beautiful".

There are references to embroidery (greasta), to engraving (breac), and to wrought metal

(cumhdaigh, fair-wrought), in the Dean of Lismore's Book and in other collections of Gaelic literature.

"Da bhfaicthea na catha is na bratacha gréasta."

"If you could see the battalions and the embroidered banners."

"Ni roibh i Nalmhain na lann inbreac."

"There was not in Almhain of engraved blades."

"Iomdha cathbharr, cumhaigh caomh."
"Many a helm, fair-wrought and fine."

The following quotations referring to Jewellers art are from the Gaelic Norwegian Ballad "Seurlus an Dobhair" (Son of the King of Bergen) "and there was found on the maiden's fingers the gold, locked up like taileasg (draughtboard squares), and there were the nine sets of stones of victory (amber) on each side of the vulture of her ring". "The maiden girdle . . . so full of conquering power and artful stratagems of jewels set in gold," . . . and sooth, the ring with the yellow stones she left round the finger of the King of Bergen's Son." "Brought to him was the true seer, who came from the countries of the world to inspect the spell ornaments (garrlannaibh)."

British and Irish jewellers, of the Pagan and the Early Christian periods, used thin hammered plates and bent and twisted wires as in Cloisonné, where the design is made in compartments of wires so that they may be filled with different metallic colours mixed with a vitreous paste, which when fired showed the splendour of the colours and probably fixed the wires to the plates.

Other Celtic methods were, by beating the metal into a thin plate and then raising the ornament by tooling it from the reverse side (repoussé) and by lowering the background parts, that were to be filled with metallic colours, by cutting out with tools (champ-levé). The "Battersea Shield," with its repousséd curves and spirals and anti-sunwise swastikas in 27 small circles that are points of the spirals or centres of bosses, belongs to the same pre-Roman Celtic period of British culture as the enamelled and engraved bronze hand-mirrors with cast bronze

#### CELTIC ART

handles. These mirrors are unique in beauty and craftsmanship. Their backs are engraved with designs of spirals and scrolls that were filled in with enamel colours. The first stages of the construction of such designs would probably be the arranging of symmetrical groups of various sizes of circles by the use of discs. The selection of the shapes to be filled in with enamel colours would be chosen as the artist-craftsman developed his design. Outlines would then be deeply engraved and the shapes to be coloured would be lowered by punches or cut out by gravers. These sunken parts would be covered with groups of engraved short lines at all angles to give the necessary textures to hold the enamel colours when fired (as a plasterer scarifies a surface to make plaster adhere to it). The enamel colours and bronze back of the handmirror would be polished as one surface.

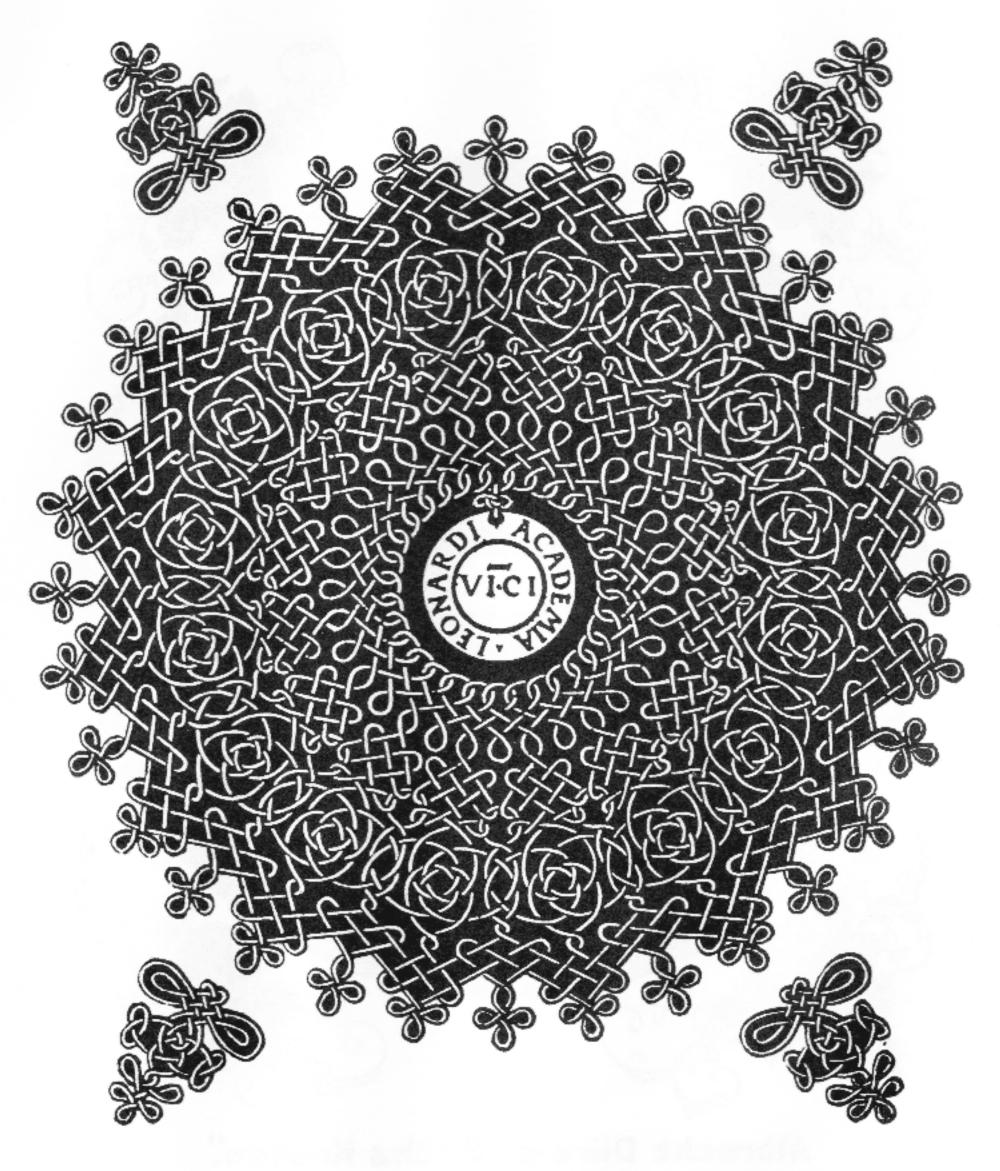
Leonardo da Vinci, Albrecht Dürer and Michelangelo were engaged in a renaissance of the Byzantine forms of Celtic knotwork. Vasari says that "Leonardo spent much time in making a regular design of a series of knots so that the cord may be traced from one end to the other, the whole filling a round space". The example of his work shown herein cannot be the one that Vasari had traced its line from end to end, for it has a number of lines. The student can find how many. The designs by these most famous artists were engraved and printed for the use of painters, goldsmiths, weavers, damaskeeners and needleworkers.

The few surviving prints show conclusively that these great artists were aware of some of the differences of the methods of construction of Celtic Art from the methods of construction of the other great arts in which they excelled. The portrait of Henry VIII of the School of Holbein, the Younger, in the Walker Gallery, Liverpool, has interlacing designs embroidered and braided on the garments and curtains that were probably done by craftsmen who had used designs made by Leonardo da Vinci or Albrecht Dürer.

An engraving by Du Pérac in 1569, of Michelangelo's Capitol, Rome, shows in the foreground, a quadrangle filled with a circle, containing a continuous pathway, probably in mosaics, leading from the circumference where it touches twelve points to the centre where it touches twelve points of a star where an equestrian figure on a pedestal occupies the prominent position. This design is probably based upon the labyrinth and if the sides of the spaces made by the intersecting courses of the pathway were built high, and with only one entrance from the outer circumference, and one to a point of the inner star, with a few minor adjustments it would be most difficult to enter the centre star and to return to the outer entrance again.

There will soon be available, a facsimile edition of the world's greatest monument of Celtic Art, the "Book of Kells," edited by Peter Meyer, Lecturer at the University of Zurich, who has kindly presented a few reproductions of its plates to the author. This great and costly replica will be an exact copy from which scholars will be able to make important studies and discoveries, at their own firesides, that will result in new valuable contributions shedding light upon the hitherto obscured truths of Celtic achievements in Art and other Cultures.

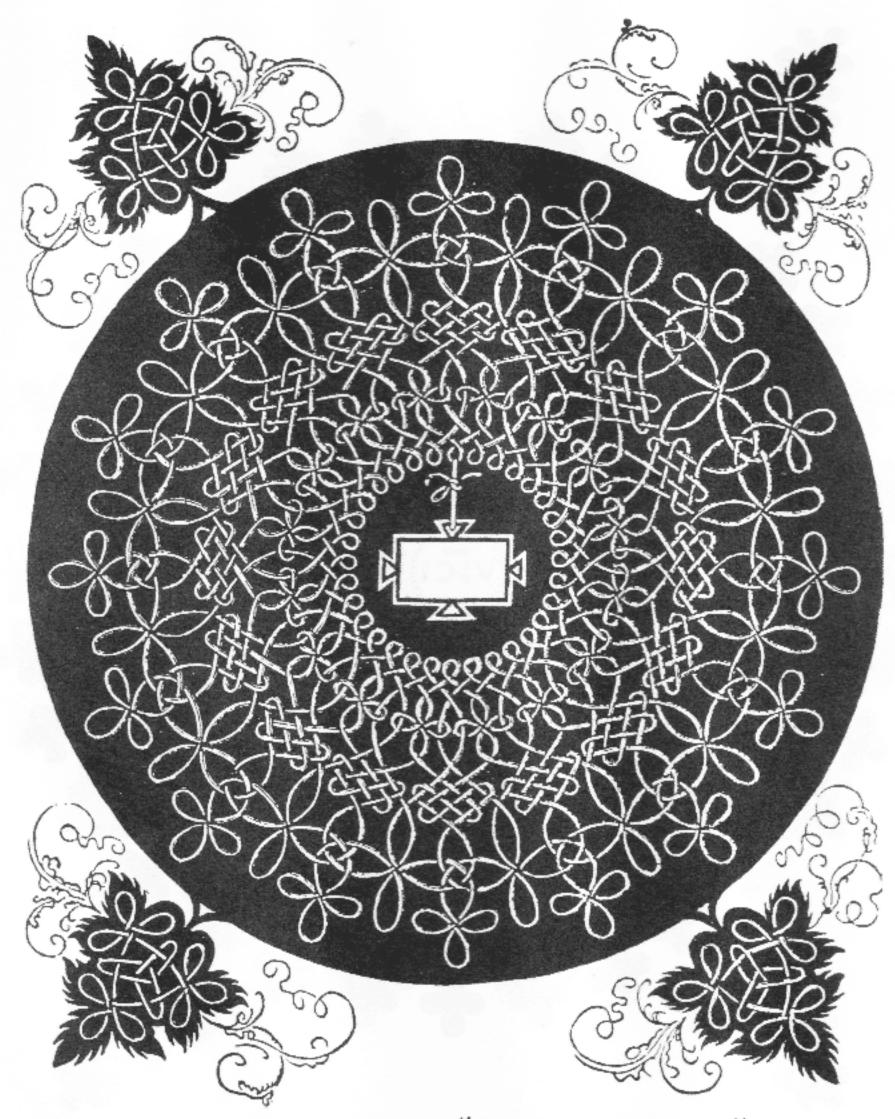




Leonardo's "Concatenation".

Plate 1

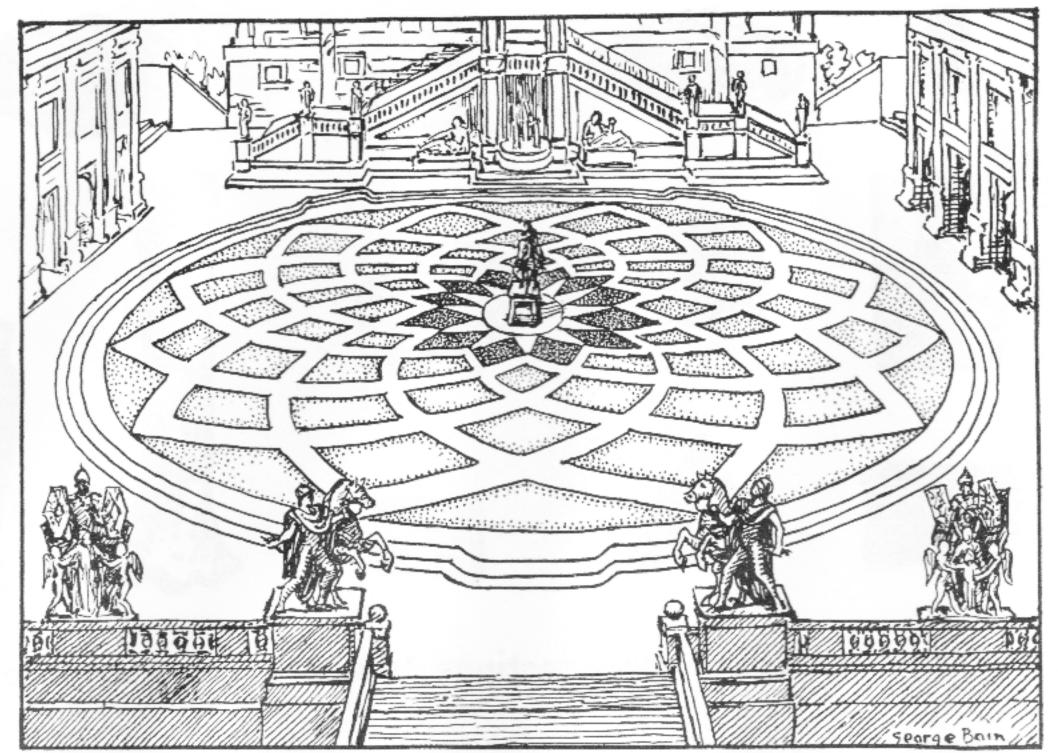
One of Leonardo da Vinci's designs for the use of craftworker.



Albrecht Dürer's "Sechs Knoten".

Plate 2

A design by Albrecht Dürer for the use of craftworkers.



Michelangelo's design of a continuous pathway in quadrangle of the Capital, Rome, from an engraving by Du Pérac in 1569.





Plate 4
Bronze champfrein from Torrs, Kirkcudbrightshire a beautiful example showing the great skill of the pre Roman Celtic craftsmen of Britain.



Bone Carvings, probable models for moulds for castings. (Irish crannogs, Stokestown and Lagore.)

Plate 5



V .- THE TRELAN BAHOW MIRROR.

Plate 6



DOORWAY OF FLAA CHURCH, HALLINGDAL

Plate 7

Plate 8

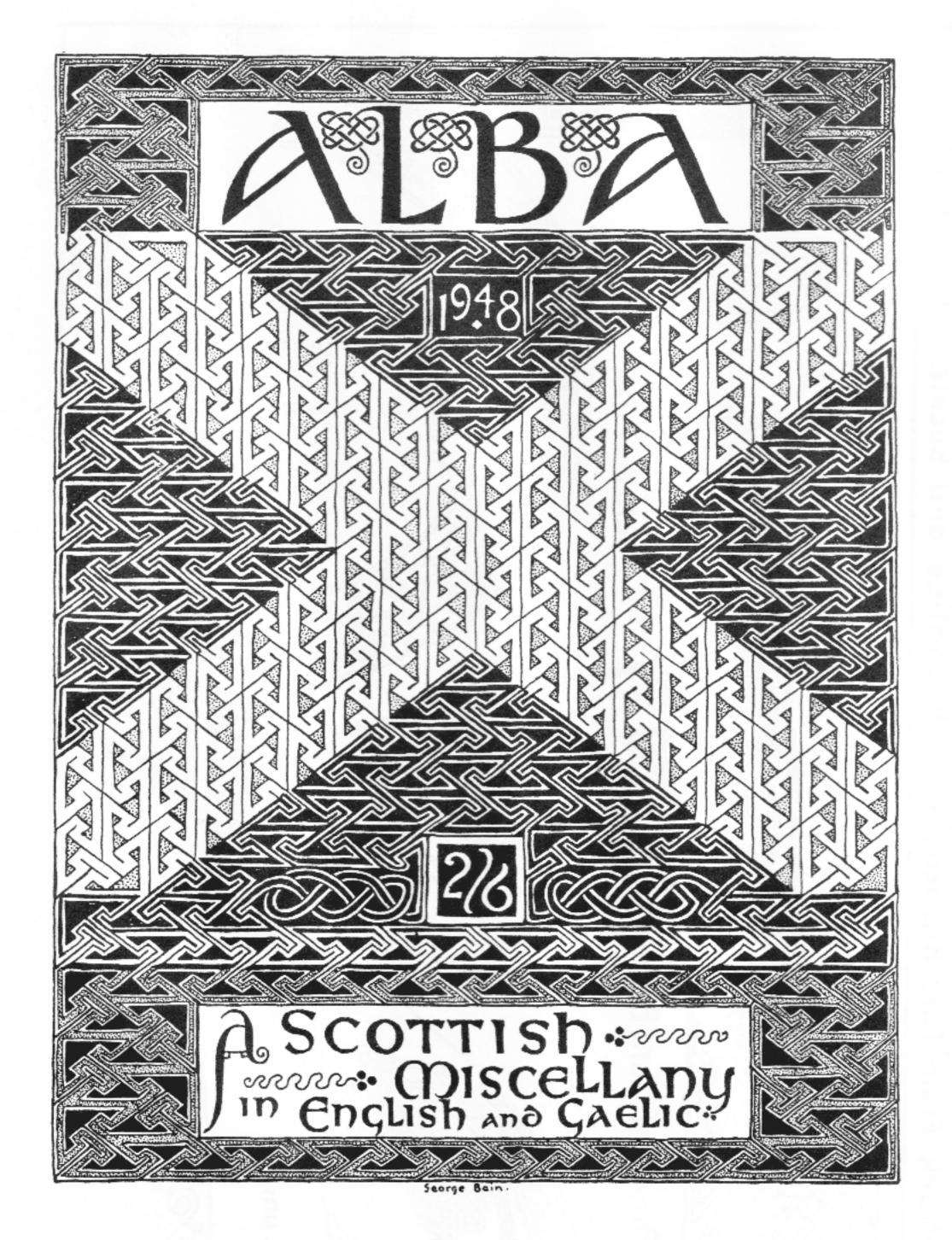


Plate 9

Design for magazine cover. This is almost entirely made by variations of keypattern order 1.8.1 see keypattern plates 1, 11 and 14, pages 75, 80 and 81.

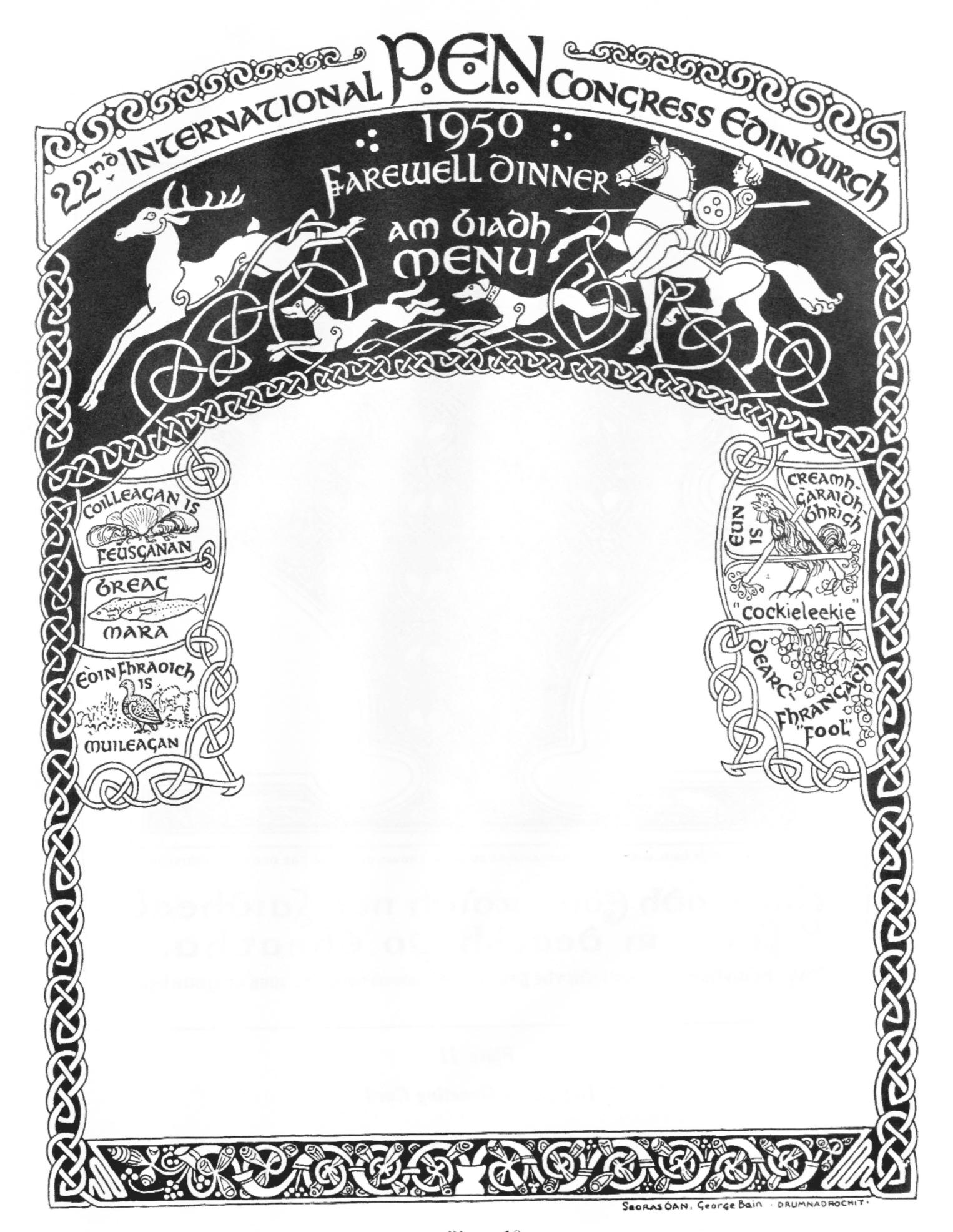
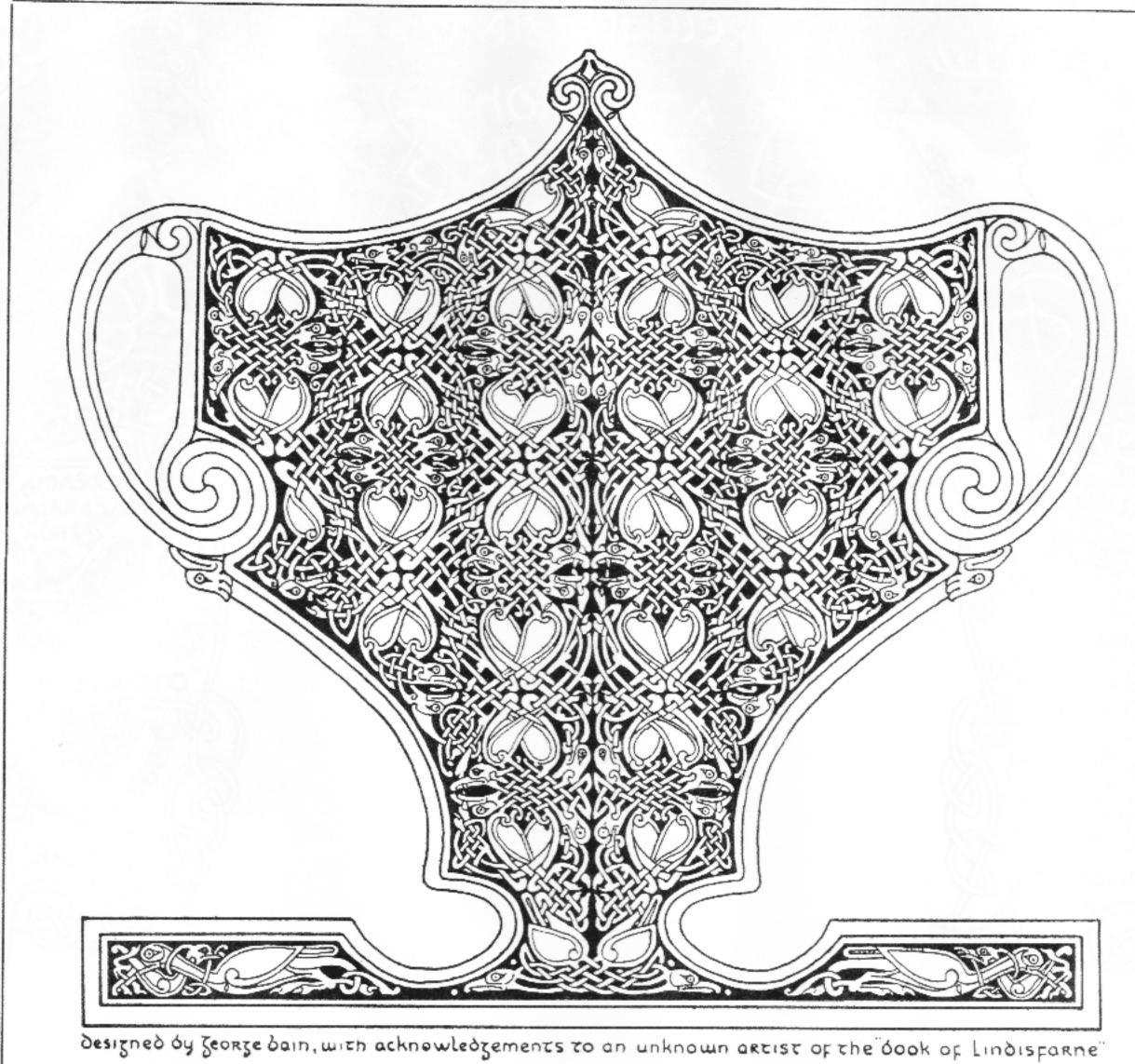


Plate 10



## Jum 6100h Goin Traidh nan Jaidheal Fillte ri dealch do Cheatha.

May the Birds of Friendship of the Zael be ever moven into the meb of your life.

Plate 11 Design for Greeting Card.

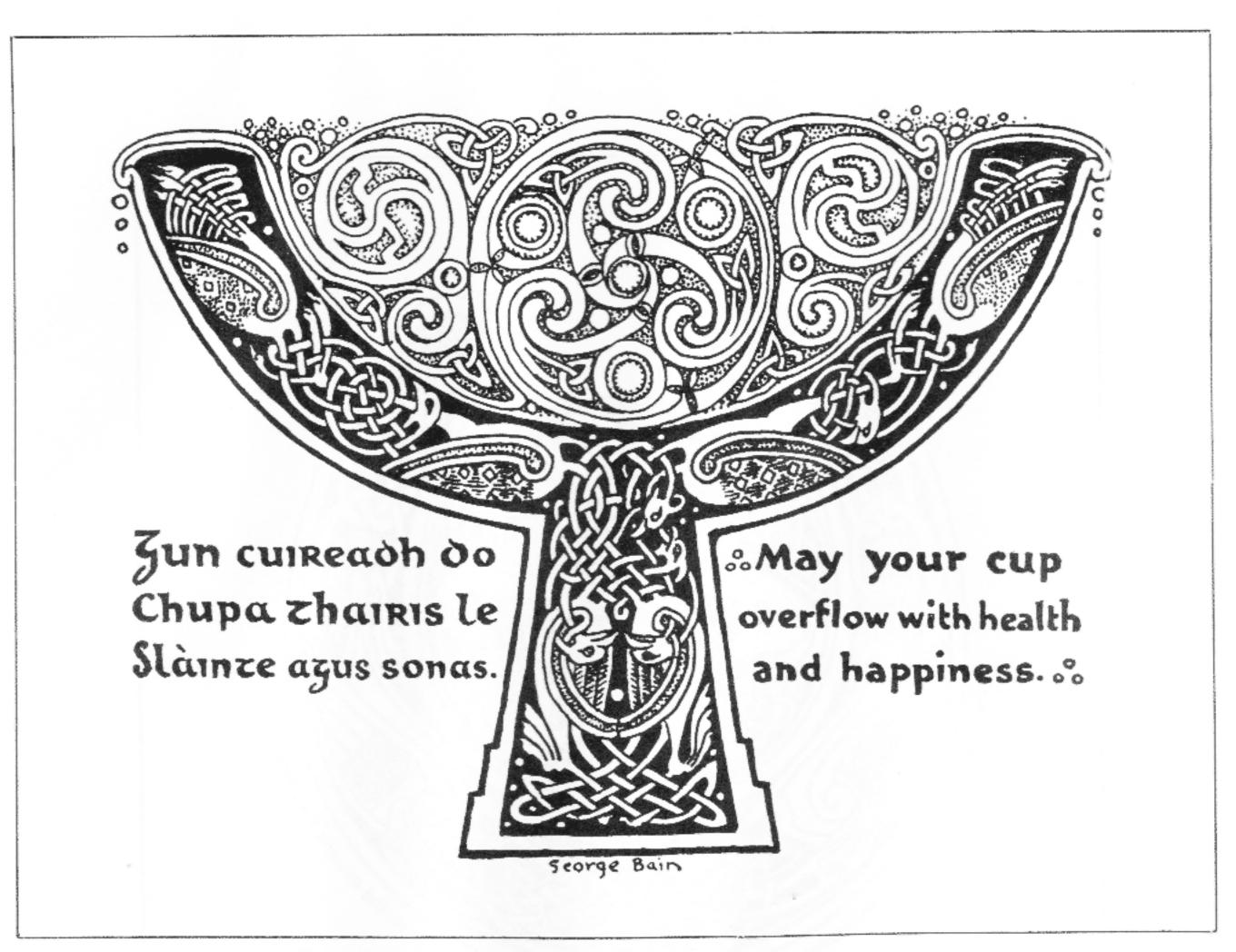


Plate 12
Design for Greeting Card.



Plate 13
Design for New Year Greeting Card.

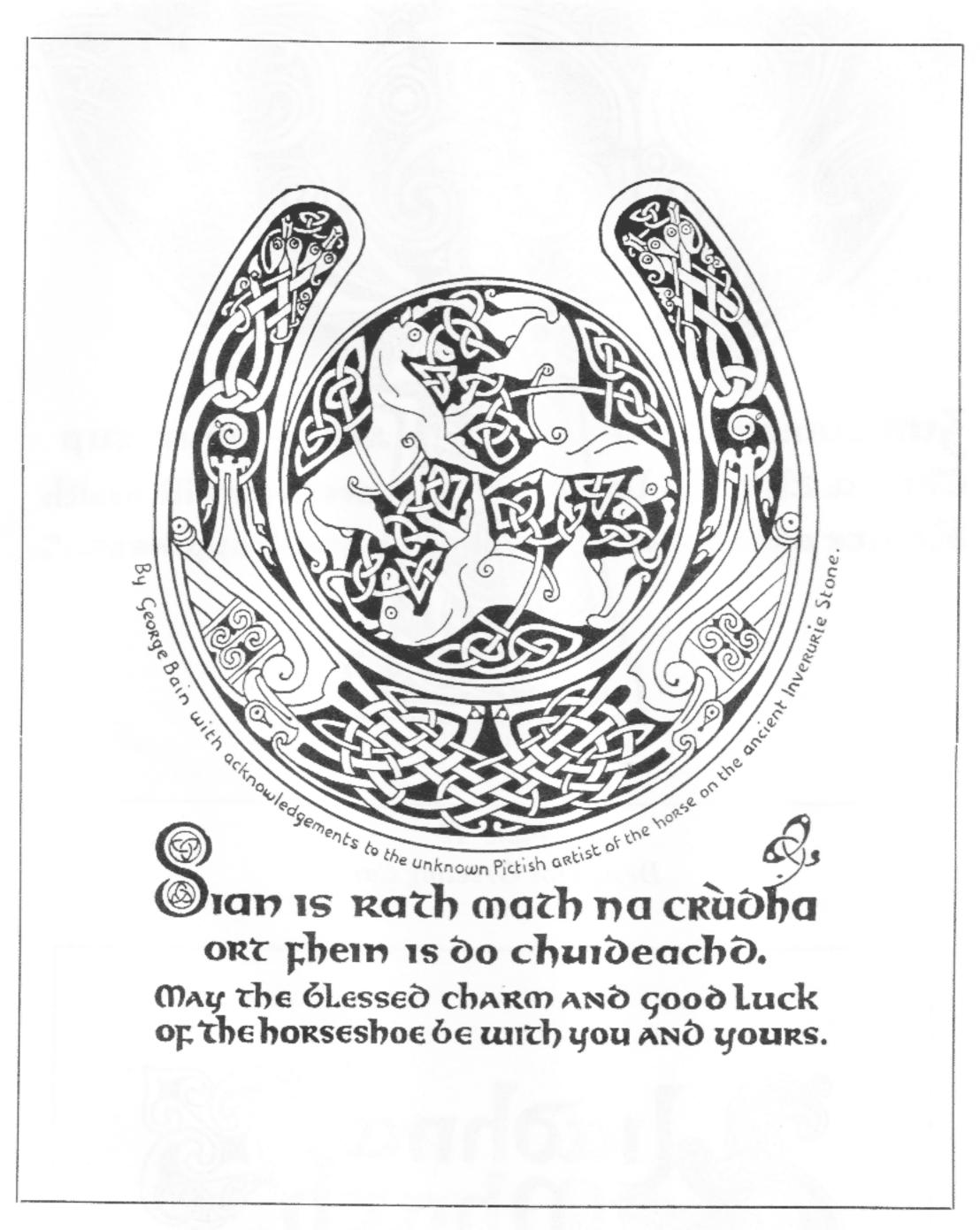


Plate 14
Design for Greeting Card.



Early British Enamel from Somerset

Plate 16



Early British Enamel from Canterbury  ${\it Plate~17}$ 

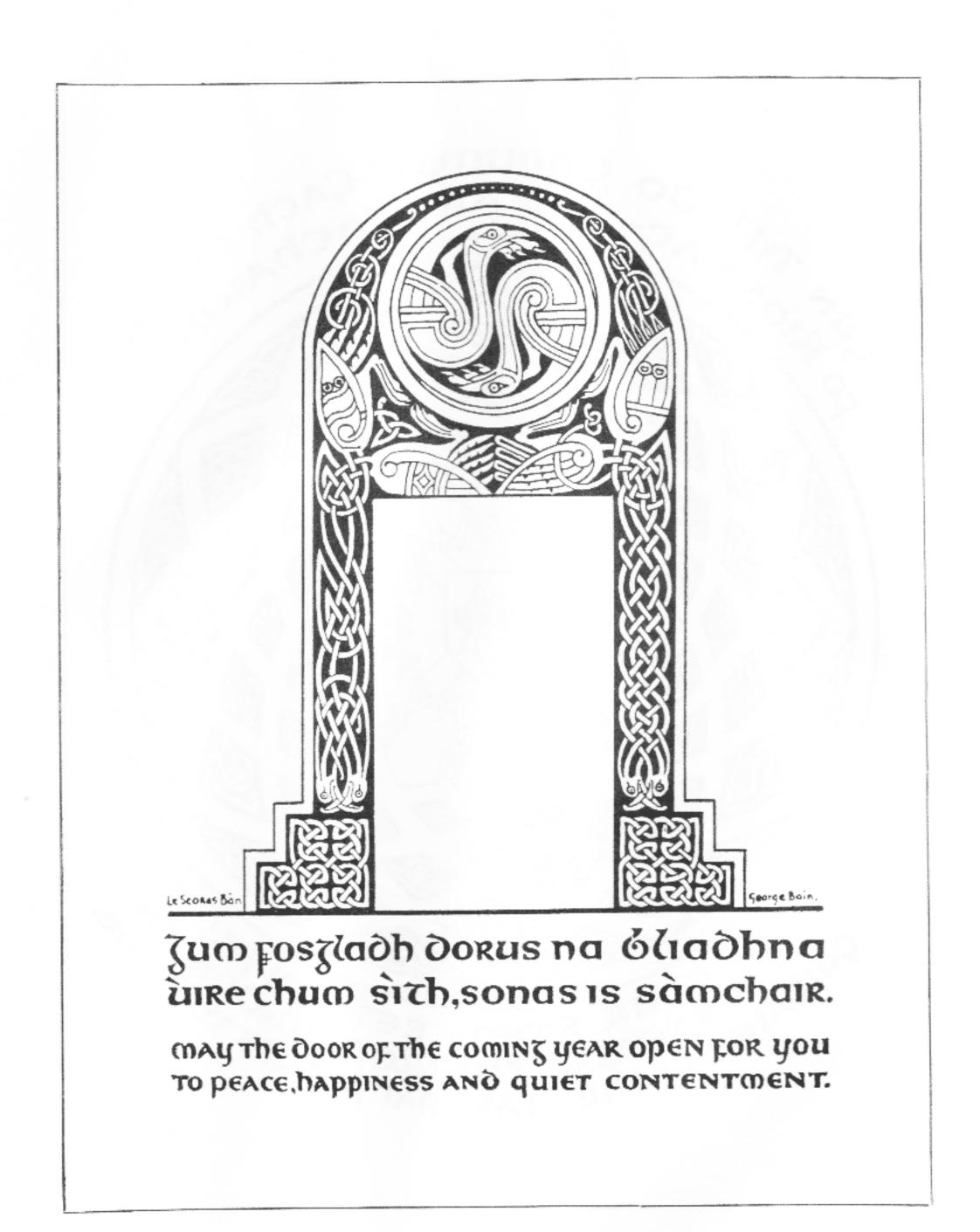


Plate 18

"Doorway" design for New Year Greeting Card.

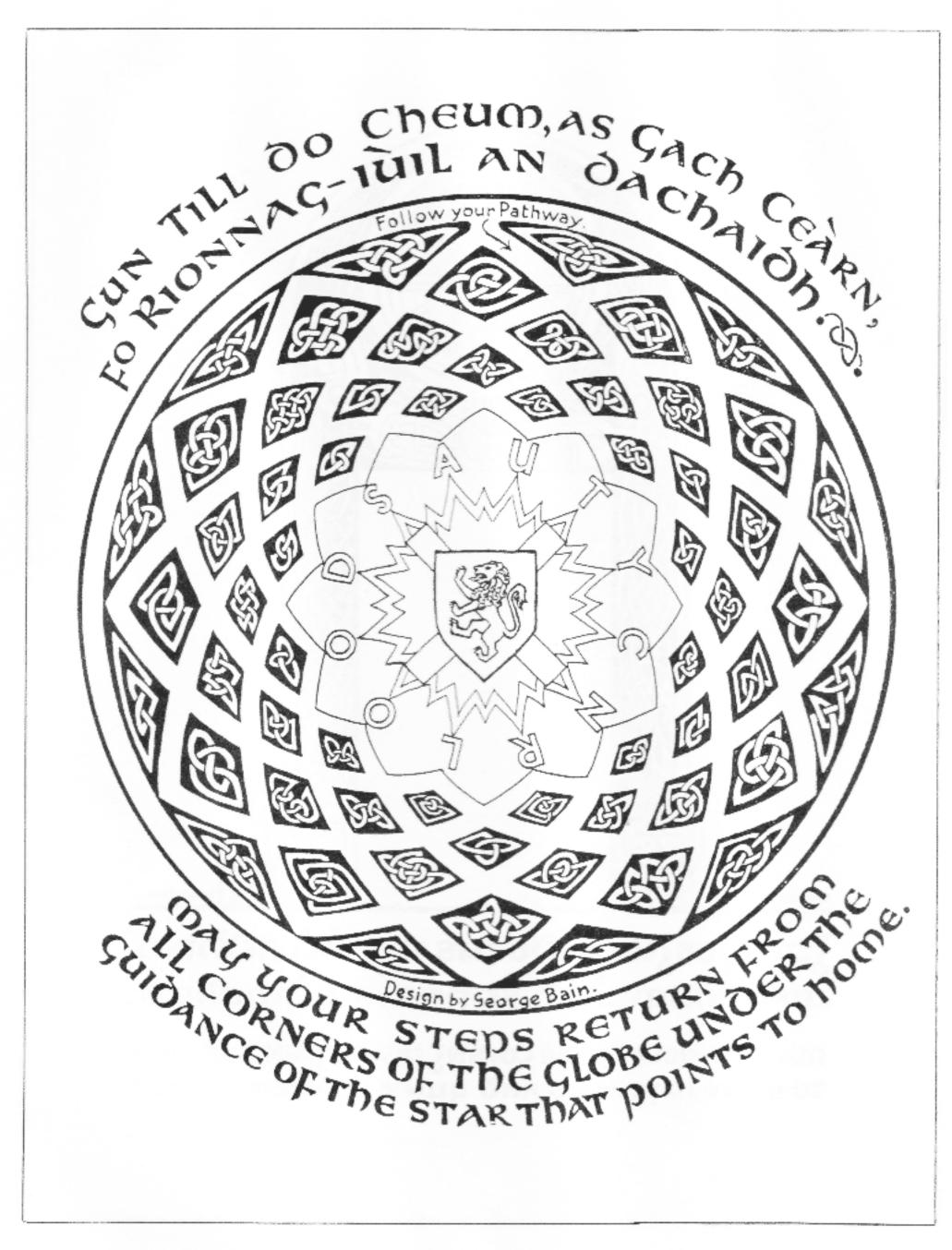


Plate 19
Design for Greeting Card.

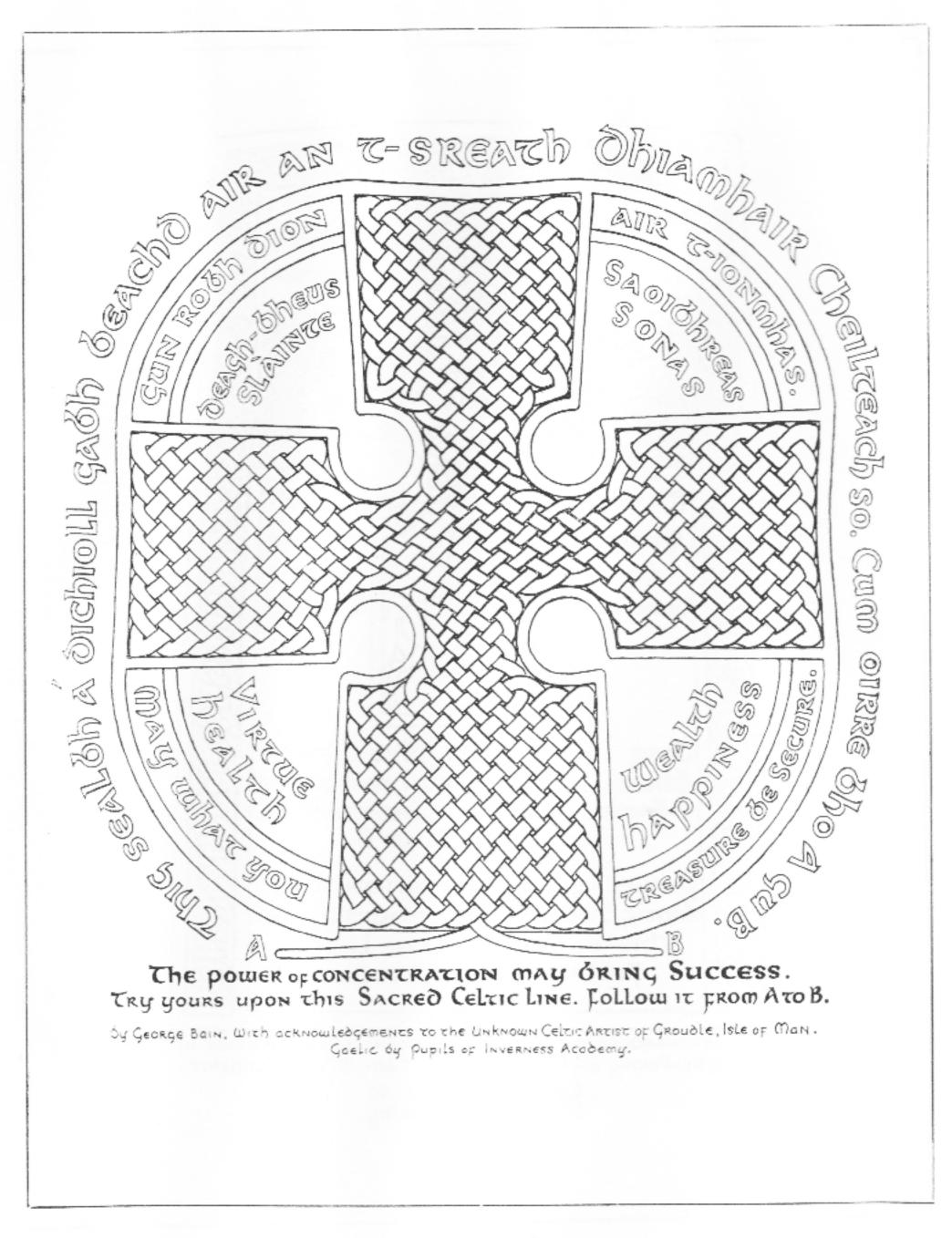


Plate 20
Greeting Card adapted from Groudle Stone Isle of Man.

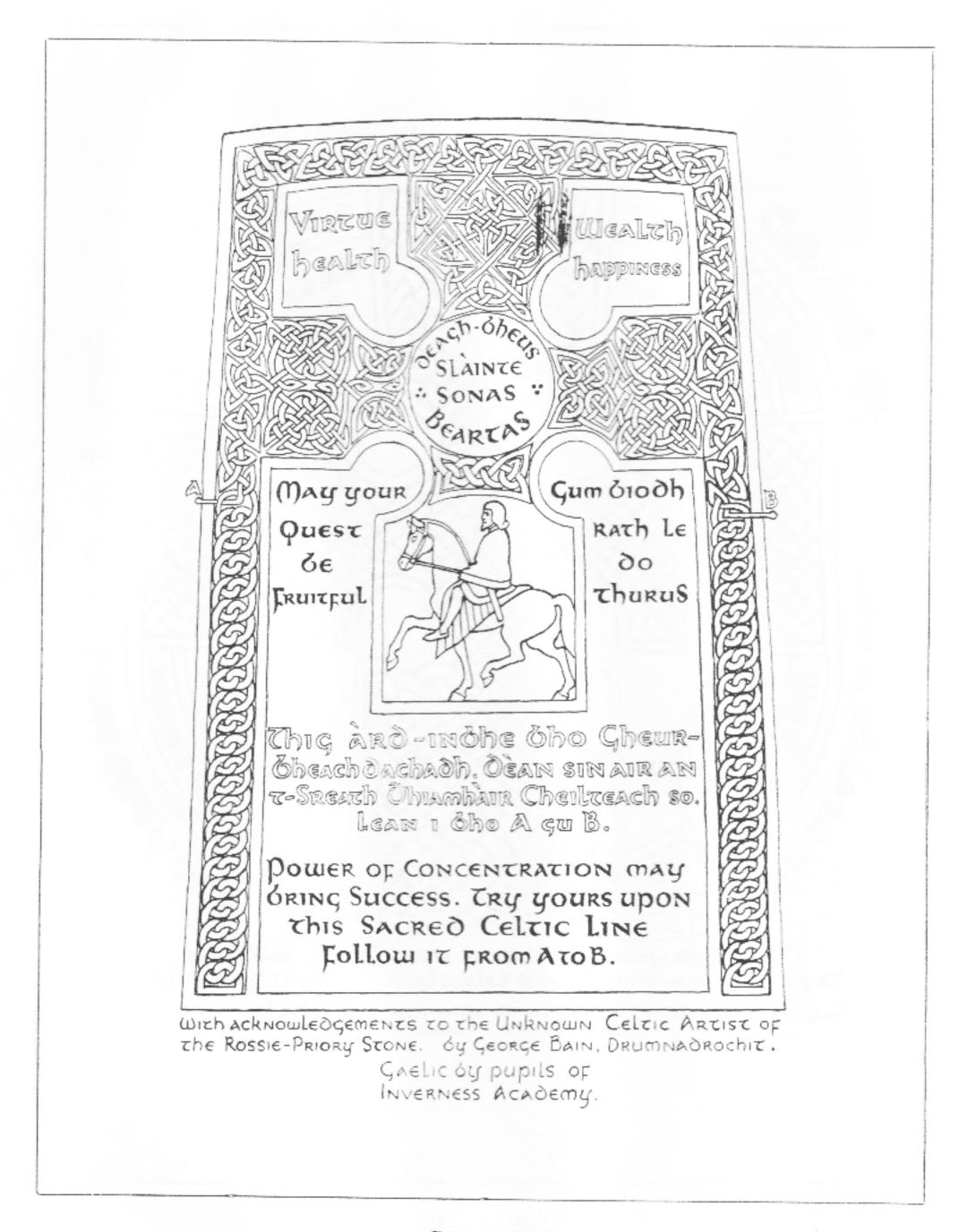


Plate 21

Greeting Card adapted from the Rossie-Priory Stone. It is probable that the stone was similarly coloured in its own day, the Celtic artist being famed for his love of colour.



Plate 22 The Rossie Priory Stone.



Plate 23
Aberlemno Stone.



Plate 24
Hilton of Cadboll Stone.



Plate 25
The author sketching the Hunt at the Nigg Stone.

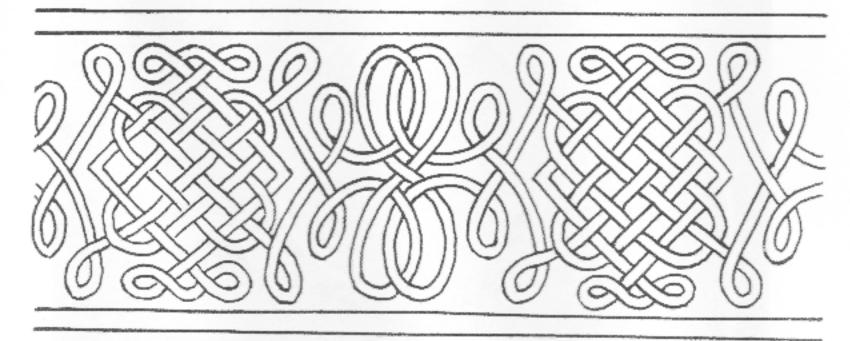


Plate 26
Rosemarkie Stone.



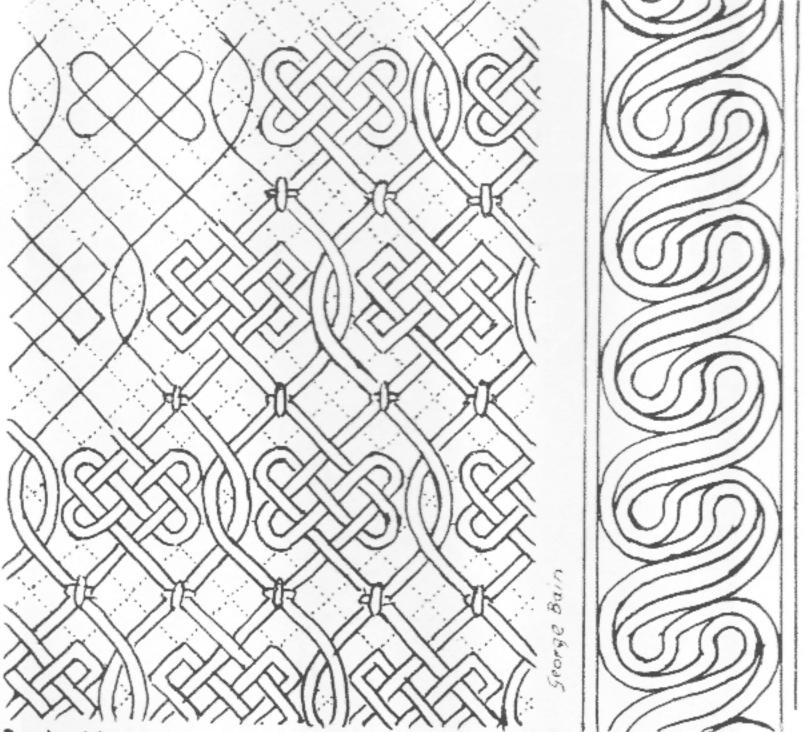
British Muse

 $Plate\ \ 27$   $The\ Battersea\ Shield.$ 



Border on Cape and Sleeves of Henry VIII portrait in Walker Gallery, Liverpool. School of Holbein yr. 497-1543.

All-Over pattern on Curtain in same. On tunic.



Probably executed from designs by Leonardo da Vinci

Plate 28



Plate 29
Walker Gallery, Liverpool.

King Henry VIII by School of Holbein the Younger.

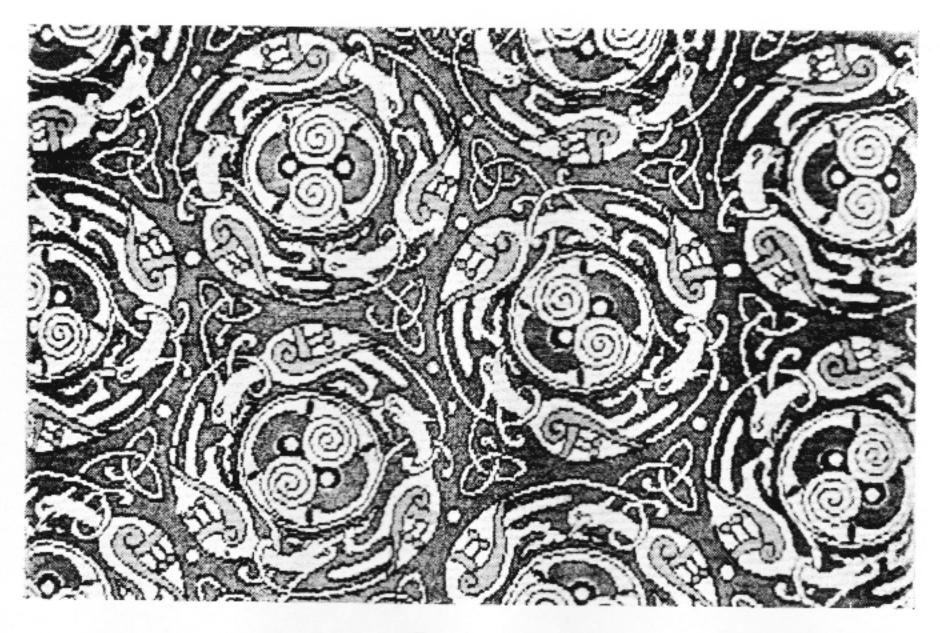


Plate 30
A portion of a Celtic carpet showing the interlacement of Zoo-morphic forms in a pleasing all-over pattern.
Manufactured by Quayle and Tranter, Kidderminster.

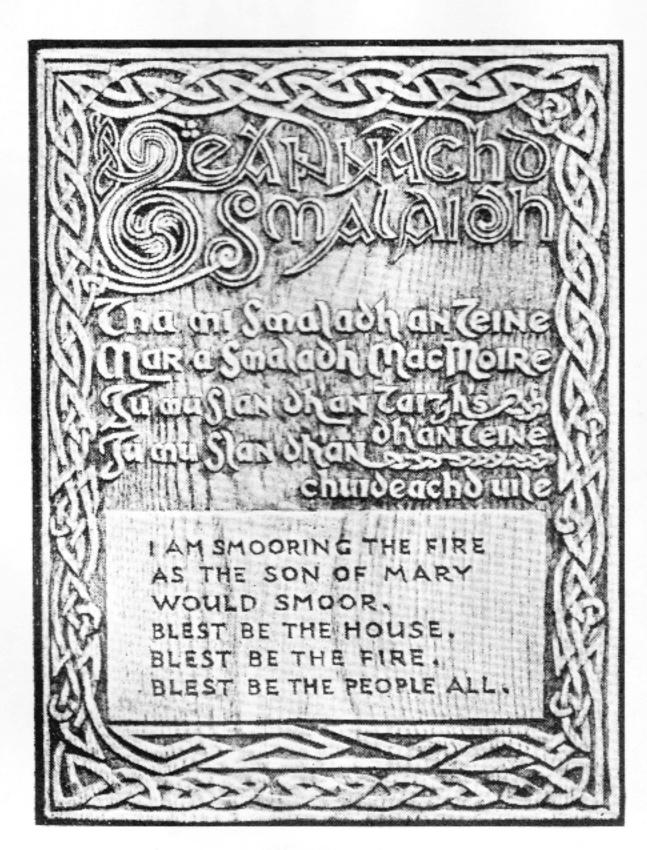


Plate 31
The fireplace panel of the blue-room of "The Binns" Linlithgowshire.
Designed and carved by the author.



Plate 32
Designed by girl aged 16 years, based upon motifs from Book of Kells etc.
Embroidered by girls under 14 years.



Plate 33
Embroidery designed and worked by school-girls.

Plate 34
All-over carpet design by the author.
Manufactured by Quayle and Tranter,
Kidderminster.

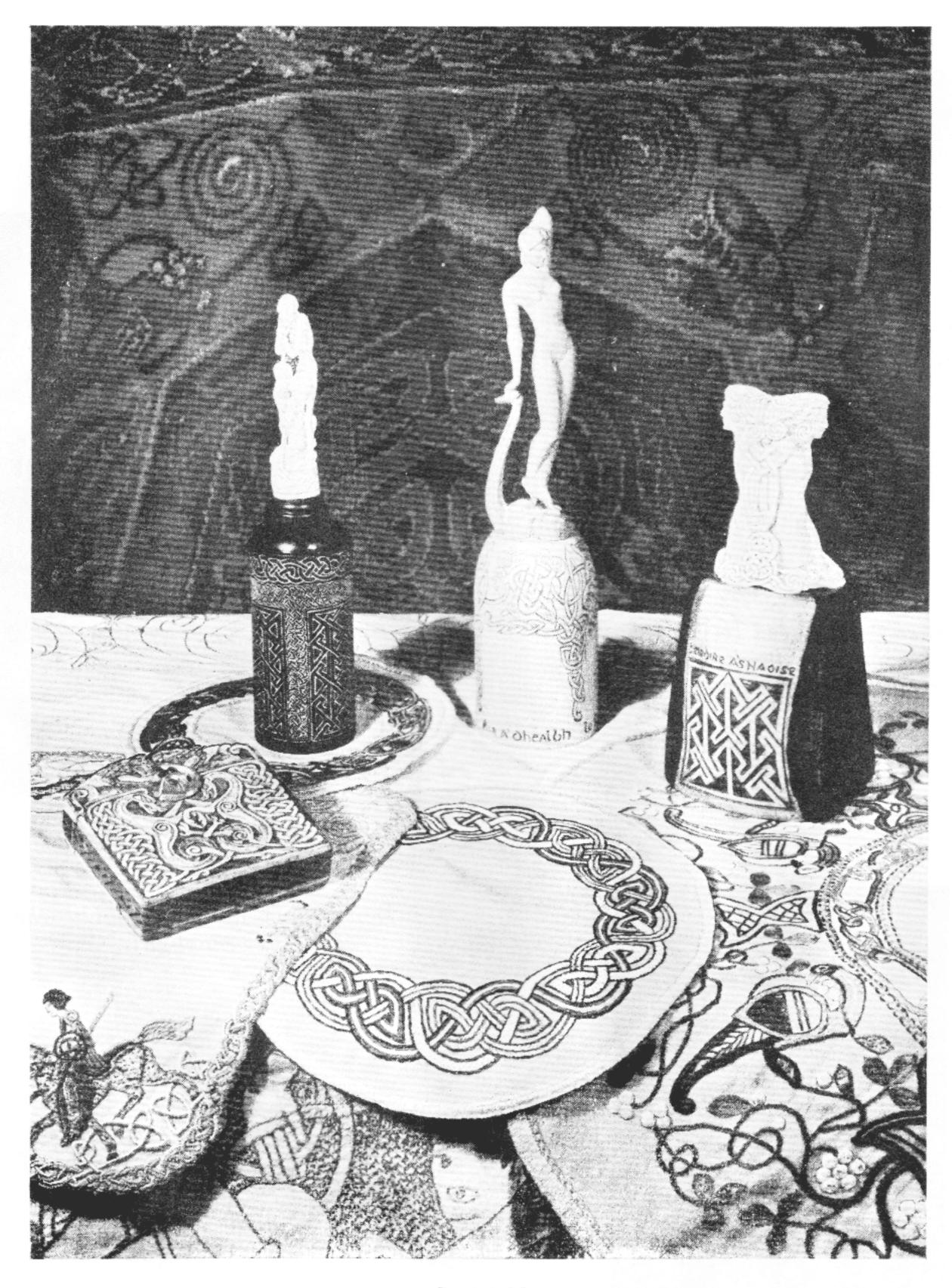


Plate 35

Articles by the author and pupils.

Figures by the author, left "The Continuity of Life," Hippopotamus tooth; ebony base. Centre "The last work of the Creator"; wood. Right "Deirdire and Naoise," Bone; Lignum-Vitae base and cigarette box; wood.



Plate 36
Articles by the author and pupils.

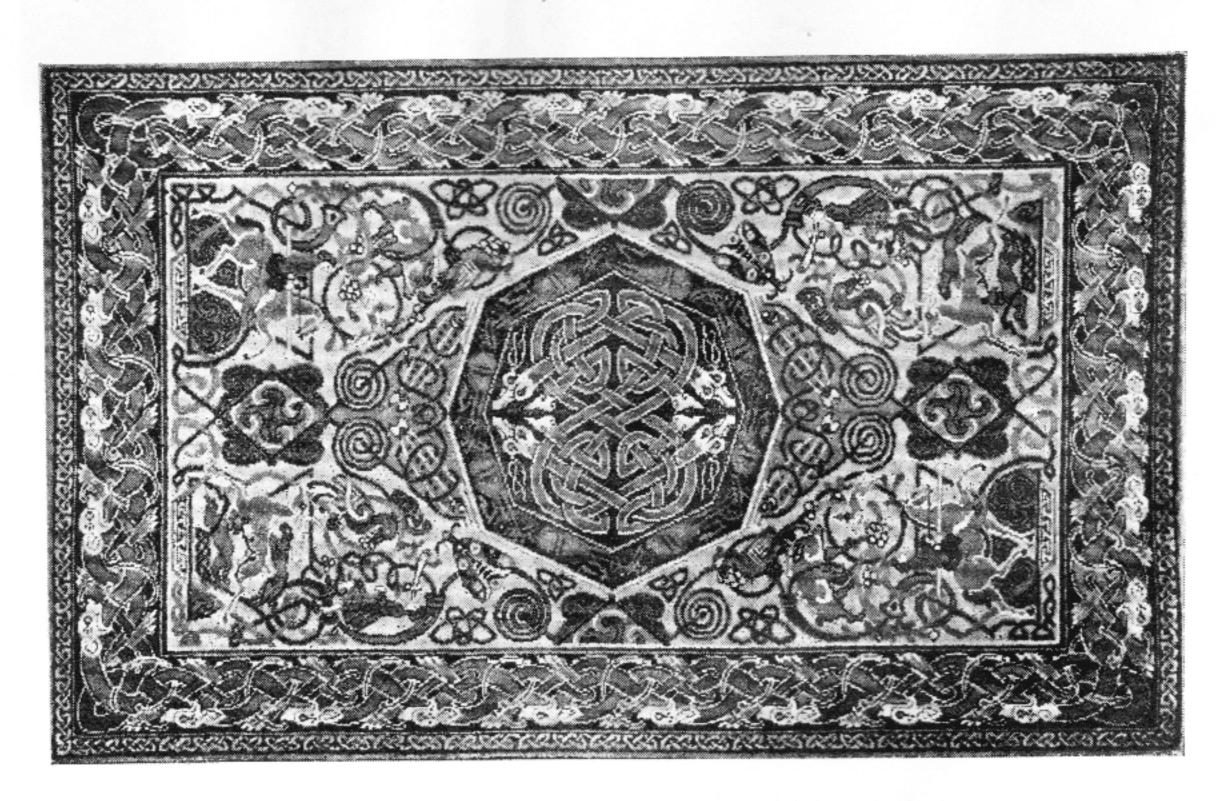


Plate 37
Design and model by the author. Sand Casting in bronze by Messrs. Macdonald and Creswick, Edinburgh.



Plate 38

The manufacturer (left) and the designer (right) at the British Carpet Manufacturers' Exhibition, Horticultural Hall, Westminster.



A Celtic Hunting Rug, designed by the author.

Manufactured by Messrs. Quayle and Tranter, Kidderminster.



Plate 39

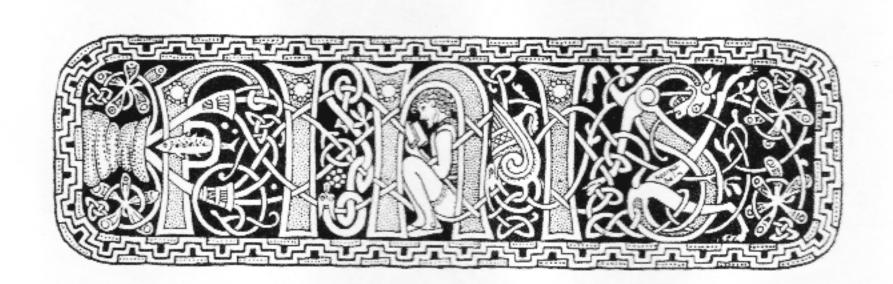
Examples of Celtic Art in knitwear, embroidered house dress, embroidered hand-bags, sporran, etc.

By pupils, from charts and designs by the author.



Plate 40

Reproduction of Bronze Plaque designed and carved by the author. Sand Cast by Messrs. Macdonald and Creswick, Gorgie, Edinburgh.



Celtic Art is the only indigenous British art form of world significance and this book is a graphically eloquent plea for the establishment of this great national art to its rightful place in schools and colleges where the history of prnament is being taught.

Until recently, the classical grientated art world has regarded the abstract, ikonographic and symbolic style of the Celtic artist as something of an enigma, a mysterious archaic survival largely ignored in histories of art. The modern trends away from realism and the interest of the younger generation in psychedelic and art nouveau styles provides favourable ground for the Celtic art revival which the recesoread interest in this new edition seems to indicate is possible.

When this book first appeared it was hailed as a "veritable grammar of ornement," It is certainly an incompable reference book and practical textitions for the art student and craftsman seeking simple constructional methods for laying out complex ornemental schemes.

The entire chronology of symbols is embraced from spirals through cherrons, step patterns and keys to another work interlacings which are onesset to this particular Celtic School. There are also sections dealing with approximately plant and hyman spening authentic Celtic lettering, should and terminals and examples of approximations in knitweer, carpers, ceramos and other areas in which the author pioneered in his day.

This book deals with the Pictish School of artist-craftsman, who out pages symbols like the Burghead Bull and in the early Christian era designed such superb examples of monumental sculpture as the Aberlemno Cross and the counterparts in the Books of Kells and Lindisfarne, the amazing jewellery conceptions of the Tara and Hunterston Brooches, the Ardagh Chalice and other masterpieces.

Knotwork Interlacings, owing much of their perfection and beauty to the use of mathematical formulae, are unique

0 09 461830 5

£7.95 net

to Pictish Art and are found nowhere else than the areas occupied by the Picts. The outstanding achievement of their art was the subtle manner in which they combined artistic, geometric and mathematical methods, (often in the manuscript art, to standards of minuteness and intricacy beyond the skills of moderns) with magic, imagination and logic, the function being both to teach and adorn.

Although incidental to the main educational purpose of this book, there is also an implicit challenge to the art historian and archaeologist. The author frankly admits that the evidence such researches into the art have revealed of a hitherto unsuspected culture of much sophistication in pre-Roman Britain, pose as many questions as are answered.

Who were the Picts? Whence the Asiatic origins of Celtic Art? How does a La Tène cloisonné enamel effect glow on Lindisfarne vellum a thousand years later? Why can a 20,000 B.C. key pattern survive the drift of migrating tribes through the millenia of archaic craft traditions to appear in the Book of Kelis and a Maya temple?

The instinct to ornament is one of the most basic human impulses that seems to have atavistic roots in the primeval creative and imaginative characteristics that separate man from beast.

George Bain clearly demonstrated in his classrooms, to judge from pupil's work here illustrated, that through practice and application in his methods of exclaracting decoration, anyone with the anitial interest can release this innate example to beautify and mark out the anitial interest can release this innate example to be anitial interest can release this innate example to be anitial individuality that has been a quality in man since the neo-lithic times of the cave artist and still finds expression through the subconcious outlines of the phone-pad doodler.

Also available from Constable:

Celtic fairy tales More Celtic fairy tales Edited by Joseph Jacobs

Celtic design colouring book Ed Sibbett, Jur

Celtic Knotwork Iain Bain

